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THE JUVENILE EMIGRATION MOVEMENT RE-EXAMINED:
A TRANS-ATLANTIC PERSPECTIVE

by

Shannon Leavoy

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research through the
Department of History in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master
of Arts at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

1995

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Abstract

In late nineteenth century Britain, thousands of children from poor neighbourhoods were sent overseas, largely to Canada, by well-intentioned philanthropists to improve both their individual prospects and the social conditions they left behind. The juvenile emigration movement has been viewed largely within the Canadian context; that is, from the perspective of the situation of the children in Canada as opposed to the conditions of urban Britain from which the children were being removed. Consequently, the individual cruelty of this solution to poverty has been questioned.

The implementation of such a severe scheme must be viewed within the context of the age, in terms of the dominant values, attitudes, and popular beliefs that permeated Victorian society. When the philanthropists are viewed historically, they appear justified in their exportation of children. The child savers were acting at a time when neither the government nor society was willing to accept sufficient responsibility for the plethora of poor children in urban Britain. Proponents of emigration, like Thomas Barnardo, made excessive claims for the scheme and were prompted both by practical and philosophical considerations. In practical terms, emigration promised to solve the Canadian labour situation, while simultaneously remedying problems of poverty and unemployment in Britain. Theoretically, emigration expressed Victorian religious attitudes, notions of environmental heredity, ideals about proper family life, and theories of social imperialism.

However, British attitudes towards emigration met opposition in Canada. Using a

trans-Atlantic perspective to examine the movement reveals that the system was inherently flawed -- burdened by the diametrically opposed attitudes of each respective society. The situation of the children in Canada must be re-evaluated in order to avoid completely discrediting the basically laudable intentions of the child savers. The situation of the children should therefore be measured in light of the contradictions between British and Canadian ideals which essentially left the children caught between two distinct value systems.

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Introduction

In late nineteenth century Britain, children from poor neighbourhoods, the sons and daughters of poor families, were sent permanently out of the country in emigration schemes which were meant to improve both their individual prospects and the social conditions they left behind. In retrospective historiographical assessment, the individual cruelty of this draconian solution to poverty has been questioned. But at the time, proponents like Thomas Barnardo made extravagant claims for the scheme, in terms of "rescuing" children from a situation that robbed them of a "proper" childhood; a situation corrupted by neglectful parents, a godless upbringing, and a damaging urban environment. This thesis will argue that the implementation of such a radical scheme must be viewed historically; that is, from the perspective of the age in which the child savers operated. When the reformers are viewed within the context of the age, in terms of the attitudes and popular beliefs that permeated Victorian society, they are justified in their exportation of children. They were acting at a time when neither society nor the government of the day was willing to accept sufficient responsibility for the poor, and for many children, the only alternative to destitution seemed to be emigration. However, British attitudes towards emigration were not uncontested in Canada. Using a trans-Atlantic perspective to examine the movement reveals that the system was inherently flawed — marked by the diametrically opposed attitudes of each respective society. The situation of the children in Canada, must therefore be viewed in terms of the contradictions between British and Canadian ideals which spilled over and affected the treatment of children, leaving them caught

between two sets of values.

The effects of industrialization upon children motivated humanitarian rescue workers who began their work approximately mid-way through the century in an attempt to save the children. A distinctive characteristic of the Victorian child-saving movement was the tendency to promote the emigration of destitute children overseas. The movement gained momentum with the work of Maria Rye, whose first party of children departed from Liverpool destined for Canada on 28 October 1869, and whose policy was emulated by others such as Annie Macpherson and Thomas Barnardo, the latter having sent more children to Canada than any other. Thomas Barnardo, whose first group of emigrants entered Canada in 1882, became the most prominent of the juvenile emigration promoters. Barnardo's scheme was primarily concerned with providing refuge for children and involved implementing methods of emigration to remove children from the undesirable circumstances and detrimental influences that festered in overcrowded cities. By 1882, Barnardo's original work among children had reached large proportions, in terms of setting up charitable refuge homes for orphaned, neglected, and destitute children, thus providing him with a large pool from which to select candidates for emigration. These family-type homes, directed by a 'mother' and a 'father', created a new environment for children, replacing the asylum and orphanage. Institutionalization, with respect to the traditional district schools, asylums, and workhouses, established under the Poor Law Reform of 1834, were viewed by critics like Barnardo as nourishing traits in their inmates that perpetuated the socialization of paupers. From Barnardo's newly established homes, he chose to send only the "flower of the flock" -- those whom had been carefully trained and

monitored both physically and mentally. Barnardo's success lay in the detail and organization of his methods. Barnardo children were accompanied to Canada by officials of the organization, and placed in distributing homes from which the children were later placed out. The situation of children was investigated after placement, and subsidies were provided to those families with a Barnardo child. Barnardo himself also made several trips to Canada to survey his work.

Like centuries before, children of the working classes were valued as a source of family income and were put to work at an early age. Despite the slight progress made by reformers early in the century to restrict the labour of children, regulating the age of children put to work as well as the number of hours worked in day, the 1850s and 1860s witnessed a large number of children employed in industry and domestic service. In the Victorian period, Thomas Barnardo also worked to remove children from the brutal conditions of industry and the workhouse, which were both morally and physically damaging. Poor children often entered the workhouse for maintenance and accommodation, having either followed their parents, or having been sent by relatives, church officials, or legal authorities because they had been abandoned. Inmates of the workhouse were provided with education in reading, writing, and religion, but educational progress was hindered by the inability to find competent teachers. Boys were instructed in industrial training and girls in domestic work. Despite this training, children from the workhouse carried a stigma and were rarely successful with placement outside of the workhouse and were often returned. The children were not separated from the adult pauper population — a circumstance which aroused anxiety among reformers who feared

that the children were "exposed to the contamination of 'communication with the adult inmates whose influence is often hideously depraving'".¹ Other destitute children did not seek the shelter of the workhouse, having managed to escape the view of the authorities, and lived on the streets of Britain.

The increasing number of children on the streets and in the workhouse was a result of the growth in towns caused by the advancement of industrial technology. This growth, characterized by the rise of factories, created a new set of dangers to the welfare of children. With urbanization and the growth of factories, the working class family was faced with increasing stresses: uncertain income, overcrowding around factories resulting in swifter transmission of disease, and shaken family life as women worked outside the home. Seasonal fluctuations in the labour market coupled with the consequent growing pool of casual labour and the acute shortage of housing, led to a desperate struggle for survival among those in the East End of London. The modification of existing conditions in the London labour market brought much despair, crippling certain London industries, subdividing skilled labour into unskilled, and displacing a large proportion of workers. Declining traditional staple industries, such as shipbuilding, silk manufacturing, and tanning, were replaced with workshop industries, characterized by unskilled labour, lower wages, and seasonal employment. Skilled workers found themselves displaced and were forced to join the growing pool of casual labourers which flooded the market.²

¹Ivy Pinchbeck and Margaret Hewitt, Children in English Society Volume II: From the Eighteenth Century to the Children Act 1948, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 538.

²Gareth Stedman Jones, Outcast London: A Study in the Relationship Between Classes in Victorian Society, (London: Penguin Books, 1984), 99-101.

The lure of factory jobs brought peaking rates of rural migrants and foreign immigrants into London, adding to the instability of an already unbalanced labour market and adding density to already overcrowded areas. The concentration of population turned into a serious problem of overcrowding. The deepening economic depression, and unreliable and expensive transportation tied normally prosperous skilled workers to the centre of the city closer to opportunities for casual work.³ By the end of the 1860s, the expansion of warehouses and offices began to invade city boundaries and extend into residential areas and those of small workshops. The problem was intensified by the demolition of old houses in order to make way for railroad lines, street improvement, and the erection of industrial dwellings. Railways destroyed existing housing, forcing the poorer classes to compete for inexpensive housing, and forcing artisans to cohabit in slum buildings with the casual poor and criminal classes. The destruction of housing was not paralleled with new construction, leaving the poor no choice but to move into nearby areas, creating problems for other communities.⁴ Ensuing sanitation problems resulted from overcrowding: lack of drainage and clean water in the slums, increased habitation alongside filthy ditches, and the epidemic spread of diseases such as cholera and smallpox.⁵

As a result of ensuing poverty and overcrowding, hoards of beggars surfaced on the streets as the city filled with unemployed workers. High rates of unemployment, made

³Gareth Stedman Jones, "Working-Class Culture and Working-Class Politics in London, 1870-1900; Notes on the Remaking of A Working Class," Journal of Social History, Vol. 7 No. 4 (1974): 468.

⁴Gareth Stedman Jones, Outcast London, 159-62. See also Thomas Jordan, Victorian Childhood: Themes and Variations, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), 230-31.

⁵Gertrude Himmelfarb, Poverty and Compassion, (New York: Vintage, 1992), 56.

visible by increasing vagrancy, and epidemic disease, created apprehension and disturbance among the propertied classes. The gross separation of classes left the upper classes ignorant of working-class culture. The upper classes perceived a degeneration of working class culture that was typified by sexual immorality, excessive drinking, and idleness. The social gap was coupled with a geographical distance between the rich and the poor that had widened substantially throughout the nineteenth century. The propertied, professional, and commercial middle classes were significantly under-represented in East London. The desertion of this area of London by those with money, and by extension, the overpopulation of poorer classes, also resulted in a disintegration of maintenance and upkeep, leaving the area run down and increasing slum living.⁶

The residuum, or 'outcast London' as those in chronic poverty were termed, whose livelihood depended on casual labour and charitable support, was believed to be completely degenerate physically, mentally, and morally, and stirred fear among the middle classes because of the potential "to contaminate the classes immediately above it," which would ultimately lead to the destruction of the race.⁷ It was fear that the residuum might destroy the high morality and economic rationality of Victorian society that ultimately inspired middle-class actions. The intentions of mid-nineteenth-century philanthropists were a combination of social improvement and social control: they sought to alleviate the worst social calamities while attempting to control the destitute and suppress their discontent. Philanthropic organizations searched for schemes that would

⁶Kathleen Heasman, Evangelicals in Action: An Appraisal of Their Social Work in the Victorian Era, (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962), 4.

⁷Jones, Outcast London, 289.

ameliorate misery among the poor but not require any transformation in Britain. This philosophy brought the child of urban progress to the forefront of concern of reformers like Barnardo, who sought to remove children from the existing conditions of slum life while there was still a chance for them to be redeemed by a new way of living, thus breaking the cycle of poverty.

Chapter one presents an historiographical analysis of the nineteenth-century child-saving movement, particularly the juvenile emigration movement, in order to examine how historians have reviewed the work of these reformers. Chapter two, a biographical assessment of Thomas Barnardo, underlines his historical importance in the context of the movement dissected in the first chapter. Chapter three makes a transition from the study of the personalities who effected the policy, to an examination of the theories through which its proponents and opponents operated. Understanding the actions of the child savers in terms of the social conditions in the nineteenth century is crucial to understanding the juvenile emigration movement as a whole. Child savers like Barnardo were prompted by immediate conditions of overwhelming poverty and destitution that lurked in the cities of nineteenth-century Britain and by the prevailing theories and attitudes of the day. The reformers believed that any situation that the children faced in Canada would be better than the circumstances surrounding them in Britain. However, reasons that seemed suitable for sending children overseas met contradiction in Canada, whose system of values and ideals stood firmly juxtaposed to those of the British.

Chapter One: An Historiographical Analysis of Nineteenth-Century Child Saving

The historiography of nineteenth-century British child rescue activities, specifically, juvenile emigration policies, has evaluated the treatment of children largely from the Canadian perspective in terms of the conditions the children faced in this new setting, as opposed to the British conditions from which the children were removed. This is perhaps the result of trends in social history in which scholars were discouraged by the limitation of traditional history with its focus on those facets of society who held the power and influence, rather than on those communities and cultures that were powerless. Focusing primarily on the child rescue workers' scheme of sending children to Canada, and concentrating largely on the work of Thomas John Barnardo, the following historiographical analysis will thematically examine changing perspectives on nineteenth-century child saving. Historians initiated the study of child saving by examining those 'great men' who precipitated social reform, presenting their lives in the form of conventional historical biography. Later, historians abandoned conventional biography as a means of looking at child saving work in favour of viewing the recipients of change but in a traditional manner — from the perspective of the philanthropists. With the transition to new social history, the recipients of change and their own perspectives received greater attention as the premise that it would be possible to write or reclaim the history of a people who had written little or nothing of themselves began to take hold. As a result of evaluating the juvenile emigration movement from the perspective of the children and their

situation overseas, the child savers have increasingly been viewed in a negative light.

However, in the enthusiasm to examine the children who were shipped overseas by way of the children's own interpretations of the subsequent consequences upon themselves and their families, historians have somewhat overlooked the circumstances out of which the philanthropists arose and the various social, economic, and intellectual pressures to which they were responding. As well, historians have neglected to recognize the power of the contradictory value systems at work in Britain and Canada and how this conflict, in turn, affected the situation of children.

The biographies of most child savers engaged in juvenile emigration, although highly hagiographic, are valuable sources of information for providing details ignored in more critical accounts. The heroic accounts of Barnardo reflect a general trend in historiography before the 1970s, reinforcing the tradition of writing about the 'great men' in history. The 'great man' approach, also termed 'contribution history', is written largely in narrative form, typically concerning itself with the political and intellectual elite. All of the early biographies of Barnardo appear as the standard form of biography -- a sort of grand memorial drawn almost exclusively from the subject's own writings, for the purpose of bolstering admiration for the country's public figures. Random examples of such hagiography appear in the following works. Doctor Barnardo: Physician, Pioneer, Prophet (1930), written by Wesley J. Bready, portrays Barnardo as one of the great men of the Victorian age. The author draws attention to the life of Thomas Barnardo and the homes he established while placing his achievement within the context of the social reform of the era. Bready promotes Barnardo as an "effective friend of unfortunate children," and

advocates him as an "emancipator" of the destitute child.¹ Similarly, A.E. Williams' work, Barnardo of Stepney: The Father of Nobody's Children (1943), and Norman Wymer's Father of Nobody's Children: A Portrait of Dr. Barnardo (1954), trumpet the work of Barnardo in the slums of Britain, praising him as a leader of social progress responsible for uplifting the moral standard of Britain by rescuing destitute children.²

The record of Barnardo's life is burdened with considerable contradiction, much of which seems to stem from his attempts to manage his public image before his contemporaries. The task of untangling the mass of conflicting assertion and evidence has been undertaken by Gillian Wagner in Barnardo (1979). This author writes the most objective and scholarly account of Barnardo's life. The other biographies are more of the nature of hagiographies, having been written by members of his staff and, in most cases, under the supervision of Thomas Barnardo's wife, Syrie Barnardo. Although Wagner herself was chairman of the Barnardo Council and thus sympathetic to the institution, she has managed to remain objective about the man and his times.³

Wagner's work uncovers the private life of Barnardo and attempts to redress the

¹Wesley J. Bready, Doctor Barnardo: Physician, Pioneer, Prophet, (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1930), 7, 8.

²Williams claims personal acquaintance with Barnardo, having worked as his secretary from 1898 to 1905, and classifies his study as a true picture. Perhaps the only other biographers claiming personal acquaintance with Barnardo are his widow, Syrie Louise Barnardo, who co-authors Memoirs of the Late Dr. Barnardo (London, 1907) with James Marchant, one of Barnardo's deputation secretaries. Numerous other biographies include, John Harridge Batt, Dr. Barnardo: Foster Father of Nobody's Children (London, 1904); Wyndham Charles, Dr. Barnardo: The Man with the Lantern (London, 1967); Godfrey Holden Pike, Children Reclaimed for Life: The Story of Dr. Barnardo's Work in London (London, 1875); Donald Ford, Dr. Barnardo (London, 1958); Evan James Gwyn Rogers, Thomas Barnardo 1845-1905 (London, 1948); Gladys Williams, Barnardo, The Extraordinary Doctor (London, 1966).

³Gillian Wagner, Barnardo, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979), x-xi.

balance against the series of hagiographic accounts. The author asserts that the largest obstacle facing a biographer of Barnardo involves trying to assess the private life of a public figure whose character is defined largely in terms of the public world he represents. According to Wagner, a prevalent feature among biographers is their unanimity in promoting Barnardo and silencing criticism to avoid discrediting an organization funded by the public. Wagner also claims that the heroic accounts of Barnardo have been influenced by the way in which Barnardo's widow wished to see her husband's life portrayed.⁴ Earlier biographies have drawn extensively from The Memoirs, written by Syrie Barnardo and James Marchant, as a tribute to Barnardo's work, inevitably presenting a one-sided point of view. In addition, Wagner demonstrates that Barnardo's later records were filled with self-deception and deliberate calculation, containing only what he wished his reader to see and only what he wished to be remembered by. Consequently, Wagner uses existing records cautiously, while at the same time uncovering previously unknown letters, reports, and articles.⁵

Towards the 1970s, the 'great man' approach typical of traditional history was abandoned in favour of social history; a more inclusive history based on the premise that it would be conceivable to write a history of people who had recorded little or nothing of themselves, looking past those who initiated change to those whose lives they sought to change, albeit through the eyes of the former. Initially, however, while social history introduced new topics of investigation, the approach was still conventional, typified by the

⁴Ibid., x.

⁵Ibid., xi.

tendency to focus on the forces of change rather than the recipients. In particular, the child savers of the second half of the nineteenth century became the focus of literature in this field. While new topics were emerging as worthy of investigation, it was still the child-savers' experience that was being examined. However, even those historians suspicious of elitist history would not deny the crucial, sometimes decisive role played by the middle class during this period.

Earlier work in this new field of social history, and of the disposition to focus on the reformers from their own perspective, is probably best personified in Neil Sutherland's pioneering study entitled Children in English Canadian Society (1976). Using changing attitudes towards immigrant children, Sutherland illustrates changing attitudes towards Canadian youth. The author dictates a favourable impression of the child savers, tracing their development of charitable, educational, and correctional organizations, viewing their work as instrumental to the general welfare of the nation.⁶ Sutherland's study is based largely on provincial records, papers of voluntary associations and child savers, institution and school reports, and church magazines, and illustrates changing adult perceptions and treatment of children in Canada. Inevitably then, such sources have led the author to paint a rather one-sided picture. His work exhibits generalized attitudes towards children and presents the child-saving movement from the perspective of the reformers and other such agencies, directing little attention to the recipients of their work. His portrait is somewhat incomplete -- void of the experience and the voice of children and their families.

⁶Robert M. Mennel, Review of *Children in English-Canadian Society*, in *American Historical Review* 82 (1977): 1369-70. See also Craig Heron, "Saving the Children," *Acadiensis* 13-14 (1983-85): 168.

The second volume of a collection by Ivy Pinchbeck and Margaret Hewitt, Children in English Society (1973), is the appropriate British parallel to Sutherland's Canadian work. Both works complement one another, while concentrating on welfare schemes involving children. As well, this book follows a trend among social historians, representing a middle-class experience by focusing on the reformers of the day. The authors discuss the history of social problems, such as poverty, insanity, and disease, focusing less on the experience of those tormented by these conditions than on the problem they posed to society in general. Children in English Society draws attention to the achievements of organized charity and government concern, tracing the evolution of the emigration movement from its beginnings with the Children's Friend Society, to the individual efforts of Maria Rye, Annie Macpherson, and Thomas Barnardo. Sutherland attends to the same emigrants from England by assessing their reception and placement in Canada.⁷

Owing to Pinchbeck and Hewitt's, as well as Sutherland's concentration and grounding in printed sources and government documents, neither of these meticulous studies pursue the trans-Atlantic policy interactions which underlay the movement or press closer the predicament of the individual child. An article by Patricia T. Rooke entitled "The 'Child-Institutionalized' in Canada, Britain and the United States: A Trans-Atlantic Perspective" (1977), suggests that perhaps Sutherland should have embraced an intellectual historical theory in order to provide a "world view": "An explanation of the distinctive Canadian mentality which arose out of the country's unique historical conditions as a

⁷Gillian Sutherland, Review of *Children in English Society*, in English Historical Review 92 (1977): 214.

British colony, parliamentary democracy, an underpopulated but vast geography, and a bi-cultural society."⁸ Many of the values that permeated Victorian British society clashed with Canadian ideals, leaving the children caught between two diametrically opposed value systems. Understanding these value systems helps to make juvenile emigration, as well as the treatment of children in Canada, more intelligible.

Thomas Jordan's book, Victorian Childhood (1987), uses both statistical analysis and a narrative approach in attempting to provide a balance to the middle-class perspective. Jordan supplements the work of Pinchbeck and Hewitt by concentrating on childhood experience rather than on ideas about childhood, or on the actions of the child savers. However, despite his intentions, Jordan seems to measure childhood within the framework of reform, examining the environment in which childhood was experienced more than childhood itself. Throughout the entire book, the author aims to place progress in childhood experience against the backdrop of the industrial revolution.⁹ Jordan traces the progress of societal concern for children, though rather uncritically, failing to account for this increased concern and ultimately concluding that the situation in nineteenth-century Britain improved for children.

Other authors have dealt in passing with the child savers within the grand scheme of evangelicalism and philanthropy. Examples of such works include Evangelicals in Action (1962), by Kathleen Heasman, and English Philanthropy (1960), by David Owen.

⁸Patricia T. Rooke, "The 'Child-Institutionalized' in Canada, Britain and the United States: A Trans-Atlantic Perspective," Journal of Educational Thought 11 (1977): 168.

⁹Thomas E. Jordan, Victorian Childhood: Themes and Variations, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), xii-xv. See also, Deborah Gorham, Review of Victorian Childhood, in Albion 21 (1989): 148.

Heasman's work includes small sections displaying how widespread child-saving was in the nineteenth century and accounts for societal response to children's needs, attributing the growing interest in child welfare to the evangelicals who were instrumental in setting up homes and emigration societies in the absence of state welfare.¹⁰ Owen offers insight into the doctrinal and social foundations of child rescue work, if only briefly in the process of tackling other issues.

The juvenile emigration movement has been granted considerable attention and has become the keystone by which historians evaluate nineteenth-century child saving. Some scholars view their work as primarily humanitarian, motivated by strong religious conviction and by the genuine desire to help others and provide refuge essential to working-class children's well-being. Other scholars have adopted a more critical framework, questioning the heroism of the child savers. Uncritical accounts of child emigration to Canada include Phyllis Harrison's collection of letters and mini-biographies of former child immigrants, The Home Children (1979); Kenneth Bagnell's vivid account of 'home children', The Little Immigrants: The Orphans Who Came to Canada (1980); Gail Corbett's patchwork of documents and interviews, Barnardo Children in Canada (1981); and June Rose's analysis, For the Sake of the Children: Inside Dr. Barnardo's 120 Years of Caring for Children (1987). According to one scholar who assessed the merits of these books, "For these writers the children were pathetic homeless orphans who were 'saved' by men and women determined to provide them with a better material existence in a stable

¹⁰Kathleen Heasman, Evangelicals in Action, (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962), 105.

family."¹¹ Although these writers recognize that many children met harsh conditions in Canada and were treated severely by foster parents, they feel that the work of these child savers and their genuine intentions should be commended rather than discredited.

With this new writing, the historiography of child saving witnessed a shift from studying the life and work of reformers from the perspective of the reformers, to a more balanced procedure of recovering the past from the bottom up.¹² This sense of a more incorporative history is manifested in Harrison's work, exemplifying a pioneering effort to reconstruct and display the experiences of the British child emigrants in their own voices. Harrison's book consists of a collection of letters from more than one hundred home children and their descendants. The letters published in this collection were received in response to Harrison's advertisement in numerous Canadian newspapers showing her interest in hearing from those who had been affected by the juvenile emigration movement.¹³ While the author does not neglect to reveal letters describing situations of cruelty and abuse and the exploitation and loneliness suffered by some British children, the letters, for the most part, reveal that the children were well-received and well-treated. Despite the shortcomings of the movement, the preface urges: "One must remember, however, when reflecting on bitter experiences, what worse lives these boys and girls could

¹¹Heron, 171.

¹²Another author worth mentioning for his attempt to provide a more balanced picture is G. Behlmer, Child Abuse and Moral Reform in England, 1870-1908, (California: Stanford University Press, 1982). Behlmer illuminates issues about middle-class child savers' motivations and the working-class response to their work.

¹³Harrison, 20.

have expected had they remained in the industrial slums of Great Britain."¹⁴

Kenneth Bagnell's work, The Little Immigrants, represents another uncritical perspective towards child emigration. Bagnell outlines the personalities of the most important child savers, praising their rescue work among the orphans of Britain. Bagnell views Barnardo's motivation primarily in terms of humanitarian concern and religious conviction. Bagnell relies heavily on Wagner's work, Barnardo, and her research into the arbitration case of 1877, and borrows extensively from Joy Parr's PhD. thesis.¹⁵ Although relying heavily on the work of these two historians, Bagnell did not adopt the more critical framework of Wagner and Parr probably because Bagnell's book, while accurate scholarship though lacking footnotes, is more of the nature of popular history, and has appeared on national bestseller lists.

Contrary to Bagnell's insistence, the children of the orphanages and children's homes were rarely without parents and were simply children whose parents had relinquished them to be raised in the homes.¹⁶ While Bagnell maintains an uncritical view towards the child savers, he is harsh in his judgement of the Canadian attitudes that looked upon the young immigrants as degenerate and irredeemable, and by extension, projected

¹⁴Harrison, 13.

¹⁵Kenneth Bagnell, The Little Immigrants: The Orphans Who Came to Canada, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1980), 10. The arbitration case formed the basis of Wagner's PhD. thesis entitled "Dr. Barnardo and the Charity Organization Society: A Reassessment of the Arbitration Case of 1877," which she attained at the University of London in 1977. Parr received her PhD. from Yale University in 1977 as well. Her thesis appeared as "The Home Children: British Juvenile Immigrants to Canada, 1868-1924." A revised version was published as Labouring Children: British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869-1924, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), and was later revised again with a new introduction in 1994.

¹⁶Heron, 169.

hostility towards the children. Bagnell is equally critical of the Canadian labour movement and its leadership in the opposition to assisted immigration strategies.¹⁷ Bagnell perceives the philanthropists as well-intentioned, but portrays a bleak situation in Canada, fraught with loneliness, hardship, and abuse. Evidence of Bagnell's favourable impression of the child savers is clear in his reference to Barnardo's work: "Whatever the flaws that were inherent in the very principle of child immigration, Barnardo's commitment to children was genuine and their affections for him were deep and permanent."¹⁸ Bagnell fails to account for the conflicting value systems of the British and Canadian populations, responsible for so much of the misunderstanding and misjudgment that explains, in part, both British and Canadian actions. For instance, he recognizes that the movement was flawed, but does not attempt to dig any deeper to understand the diversity of the respective societies, which partly explains why and how the movement was imperfect. However, even though Bagnell's conclusions are unsatisfactory his evidence is still useful. Since much of Bagnell's impressions were formed after interviewing hundreds of surviving immigrants -- a strategy illustrating a determination to retrieve and present a balanced picture consisting of both middle-class reformers' and working-class childrens' accounts -- his work is very much central to the understanding the juvenile emigration movement and solidly represents social history.

Another example of a sympathetic view of the child savers is manifested in Corbett's book. Corbett's work appears as a scrapbook comprised mainly of speeches made

¹⁷Wayne Roberts, Review of *The Little Immigrants*, in Quill and Quire 46 (December 1980): 31.

¹⁸Bagnell, 174.

by Barnardo, letters written to and from siblings in Britain and Canada, first-hand accounts of immigrants, statements of Barnardo's staff and other contemporaries, and excerpts from newspapers of the day. Barnardo Children in Canada is a portrayal of the rescuing efforts of well-intentioned reformers and an account of children "building a better world for themselves and their descendants" in Canada.¹⁹

Similar sentiments run through June Rose's book, For the Sake of the Children. Rose takes a somewhat different slant by assessing Barnardo's influence up to the present day. In order to write her history, Rose studied the Barnardo archive housed at Liverpool University, as well as the organization as it exists today, speaking to both staff and children. The tone is generally sympathetic, admiring Barnardo for having delivered hundreds of children from poverty and degradation. She employs discourse analysis to trace the attitudinal changes of the child savers and society at large. Changes in the use of language can often indicate important turning points in social history. Rose observes that the terminology used to describe poor children provides insight into the evolution and progression of child-saving work, implicitly indicating that there is a sense in which language determines consciousness.

In the nineteenth century, before philanthropists like Barnardo had transformed the care of destitute children into a national concern, they were regarded as little more than child refuse. Barnardo himself described them as street arabs or little rescued gutter lads. By the 1920s and 'thirties boys and girls entering Barnardo homes were termed 'lonely little children.' Today the charity cares for children with special needs.²⁰

¹⁹Gail H. Corbett, Barnardo Children in Canada, (Peterborough: Woodland Publishing, 1981), preface.

²⁰June Rose, For the Sake of the Children: Inside Dr. Barnardo's: 120 Years of Caring for Children, (Toronto: Hodder Stoughton, 1987), 15.

By examining the language used in reference to children, Rose indicates that societal attitudes changed, gradually becoming generally more favourable.

Canadian social historians have been inclined to view nineteenth-century child savers in a more negative light, addressing assumptions that prevailed in prior scholarship and unveiling inaccuracies in the uncritical interpretations. The most persuasive illustration of the critical view of historians is apparent in Joy Parr's Labouring Children: British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869-1924. This book was first published in 1980, and was reprinted in 1994 with a substantial new introduction examining the historiography of the history of childhood. Parr's study is a significant contribution to the fields of family, economic, and labour history. She is the first to look critically at the juvenile emigration movement and to assess its causes and consequences for children. This historian investigates what prompted the child savers' interest in the urban poor, and what inspired them to send children overseas. She explores the children's place in Canadian society, and reviews the reasons that brought the movement to a halt.

Parr contextualizes the movement by establishing the social standing of most of the reformers, concluding that they were largely middle-class men and women who received sponsorship and funding from the wealthy elite. Additionally, most were characterized by their non-sectarian revivalist evangelicalism, a philosophy predisposing them to employ emigration as a means of rescuing children.²¹ Shattering many of the myths associated with child saving, especially those presented by Bagnell, Parr establishes that most of the

²¹Heron, 171. See also Joy Parr, Labouring Children: British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869-1924, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press Inc., 1994), 35. This religious philosophy is crucial to the motivation behind the movement, and will be consulted in greater detail in the following chapters.

children taken into the homes and subsequently sent overseas, were not orphans, but children of working-class families in economic strife. The children were abandoned to the homes because their parents could no longer finance their survival.²² Parr observes that the proportion of actual orphans was very small, and elaborates upon the reformers', namely Barnardo's, policy of shipping children to the colonies without the permission of their parents, coupled with their efforts to keep parents ignorant of their children's whereabouts.

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Labouring Children is based upon case records of the family and working class lives of the home children through the eyes of reformers and government inspectors, interleaved with letters from the children. By examining the homes' confidential case records, Parr uncovers tremendous contradiction between the children's backgrounds and the child savers' accounts of neglect and abuse. Instead, "the admission documents show strong family affection and family cohesion among the labouring poor, reveal parents more respectable than suspect and record more admissions on economic than on moral grounds."²⁴ Another distortion upon which Parr sheds new light is the suggestion that it was primarily the poverty of the children that motivated the child savers and aroused their sympathy. Evidence indicates that "it was not poverty itself, but the threat of the 'lapsed

²²Parr, 64.

²³Ibid., 65, 71. Parr uses statistical analysis to defend many of her points, providing tables, graphs, and appendix detailing her method.

²⁴Ibid., 63. On page 62, Parr states that only eleven per cent of Barnardo's young immigrants were admitted on moral grounds alone. This coincides with Rooke and Schnell's Canadian perspective and recognition that the homes provided a place for the urban poor to send their children when they could no longer afford to keep them.

masses' and 'dangerous classes' which provoked their child-snatching activities."²⁵ Parr states that "concern about the children's safety abroad was overwhelmed by concern for public safety at home."²⁶

While Parr recognizes the importance of understanding the personalities of the child savers, and what moved philanthropists to remove children from their home country, she neglects the strength of the feelings and fears of the reformers, and how the Victorian attitudes and values that were so deeply embedded in middle-class society dictated their actions. To judge emigration by twentieth-century standards would lead undoubtedly to a negative response; however, to those child savers of the nineteenth century, dominated by a world of powerful ideas and values, emigration appeared to be the only conceivable solution both to the poverty of urban Britain and to the desperate conditions of the children of the working class.

Another critical analysis is Lost Children of the Empire (1989), written by Philip Bean and Joy Melville. These authors uphold the basic assumptions of Parr by recognizing that nineteenth-century attitudes saw child migration as "a safety-valve against unemployment."²⁷ The middle classes feared that the unemployed poor children would

²⁵Heron, 172.

²⁶Parr, 33. An article by Thomas Jordan entitled "'Stay and Starve, or Go and Prosper!' Juvenile Emigration from Great Britain in the Nineteenth Century," (1985) Jordan extends Parr's sentiments by viewing emigration as a kind of deportation of troublesome youth labelled by Mary Carpenter, influential advocate of special treatment for young offenders, as 'children of the perishing and dangerous classes'. Jordan clarifies that perishing implied they would do better elsewhere, and dangerous meant that they were potential criminals, and consequently a threat to society.

²⁷Philip Bean and Joy Melville, Lost Children of the Empire: The Untold Story of Britain's Child Migrants (London: Unwin and Hyman, 1989), 59.

grow to become discontented and undermine the stability of British society. These authors dwell on the fact that while emigration was thought to be in the best interests of the children, they were rarely consulted, not given a choice of whether to remain or go, and were often led to believe that their stay in Canada would be only short-term.²⁸ Bean and Melville reveal the hostile circumstances many of the emigrants faced, presenting a chapter dedicated to the children's own expressions of their experiences. Bean and Melville describe the actions of the child savers as manipulative and cunning, making specific reference to how philanthropists tampered with the children's letters to England, erasing any negativity or pleas to return. Once these letters reached England, they were often exhibited in the magazines of the day, triumphing the success of the reformers by providing the population with a false impression of the children's experiences.²⁹ However, what is not mentioned is the fact that the child savers believed that no situation could be worse than the one in England. The authors provide stories of adults forced to emigrate as children who are now seeking their roots and trying to locate relatives in England. Bean belongs to the Child Migrants Trust which is an organization currently helping children reunite with their parents and other family members. He is therefore predisposed to be sympathetic to the situation of the children.

Another historian has addressed the questions surrounding the juvenile emigration movement, tracking the child immigration movement to South Africa, New Zealand,

²⁸Anonymous, Review of *Lost Children of the Empire*, in Times Educational Supplement, (April 21, 1989), B4.

²⁹Bean and Melville, 47. The fact that the children were able to write letters indicated a level of literacy obtained most likely in Canada or in the British ragged or industrial schools.

Australia, and Canada, disclosing many of its weaknesses. In her landmark study Children of the Empire (1982), Gillian Wagner, also the author of Barnardo, provides a shrewd analysis of child rescue groups while adding to Parr's elaboration of child-saving motives. Like Parr, Wagner suggests that the children sent overseas were removed from Britain because they had either committed a crime or had become public nuisances through destitution. Wagner extends the growing dominance of the idea of social imperialism, forwarding the proposal that the child savers felt responsible for peopling Britain's empty colonies. Since Britain had a surplus labour market and Canada needed workers, the reasonable solution seemed to be the shipment of children to the colony under the disguise of the child-saving movement.³⁰ While Wagner mentions the philosophy of social imperialism, she seems to look upon it negatively, and as a sort of cover for removing children. She does not account for the strong presence of this doctrine and its subsequent impact on the child-saving movement. Similar to Wagner, Desmond Glynn, author of "Exporting Outcast London': Assisted Emigration to Canada, 1886-1914," explores the movement of children from Britain to Canada during the twenty years before the First World War, and reveals how this movement found a place within the discourse of social imperialism. Visions of a greater Britain penetrated late nineteenth-century thought,

³⁰Gillian Wagner, Children of the Empire, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982), xii. An article by Edna Bradlow, "The Children's Friend Society at the Cape of Good Hope" (1984), discusses the emigration movement in the 1830s when the Children's Friend Society promoted the emigration of British children. She puts forth the same economic proposal as Wagner, stating that it was not the children's condition of poverty that motivated the reformers so much as it was their desire to remove unwanted population while providing Cape employers with a labour force. The Cape employers were about to lose their slave labourers due to the abolition of slavery, and therefore needed workers. Consequently, the residue of authoritarian attitudes among the South Africans perpetuated pauper apprenticeship which was no longer existent in Britain.

postulating a paradoxical system of interdependence and self-sufficiency, and featuring the colonies as symbols of Britain's power and solutions to her weaknesses. Glynn shows how the differences between Britain and Canada were those by which imperialism was both fostered and defeated. While the cultural, economic, institutional, and social barriers between Britain and its colonies were the foundation upon which the rhetoric of imperial unity was founded, they were also responsible for its lack of success. The heightened sense of social responsibility in Britain, and the desire to remedy the unemployment situation at home while strengthening the colonies overseas, was not generally met with approval on the Canadian side. Glynn demonstrates that Canadians viewed assisted imperial emigration in the same light as the casting out of unwanted segments of the population.³¹

The importance of Glynn's article, for the purpose of this thesis, is unravelling the different conceptions that infiltrated British and Canadian thought respectively. The contradictions between the two help to clarify why the emigration movement has been burdened with such controversy. Ideas and actions that the British thought were acceptable, met opposition in Canada, a nation guided by its own system of values and attitudes. Using the doctrine of social imperialism as a case in point, Glynn shows how reformers' efforts at assisted emigration were unsuccessful due to the inability to establish an official framework through which they could carry out their work. The barriers between the two societies made the program untenable. The tendency among historians has been

³¹Desmond Glynn, "'Exporting Outcast London': Assisted Emigration to Canada, 1886-1914," Histoire Sociale/Social History, Vol. 15 No.29 (May 1982): 209-10, 237-8.

to focus on the negative treatment the children received, and to condemn the movement based largely on the notion that the child savers were pursuing their own interests rather than those of the children. Perhaps a better way to view the movement is that it was inherently flawed, accepting the fact that two fundamentally contradictory conceptions, and two diametrically opposed value systems were at work, accounting largely for the poor treatment some of the children endured upon placement in Canada. Reasons that the British reformers might have perceived as supportive of emigration, were not embraced with so much enthusiasm in Canada.

Wagner and Parr shatter many myths surrounding the juvenile emigration movement; however, when assessing the actions of the child savers, they fail to stress enough the power of ideas, and neglect to unravel the distinctiveness of two opposing cultures. For instance, these two critics of the movement observe that contrary to the child savers' campaigns stressing the importance of efficient parenting, children were rarely welcomed as family members in Canadian homes, arguing that the children were received merely as inexpensive labour hands.³² They evaluate and reduce child saving to a method of social control – a way for the middle class to maintain the stability of British society by attacking the poorer classes, rather than the aspects of society that placed them in that position. However, what these historians do not stress is the fact that the reformers were driven by the surrounding circumstances and ideals of their society. They anticipated a warm acceptance for the children once in Canada. They were motivated by the belief that the redemption of children would take place through work and self-discipline in a new

³²Heron, 173. See also Parr, 50, 130.

environment -- opportunities that would only be possible in Canada. Notions of insinuating social control might be better understood when weighed against the fear that the growing number amongst the poorer classes were a threat to Victorian society. The middle-class fear was real and deeply set in nineteenth-century society, and they were simply acting upon that fear.

The historiographical analysis of the nineteenth-century juvenile emigration movement illustrates a tendency among historians to review the treatment of British children from the perspective of the circumstances the children faced in Canada, rather than from the British conditions from which the children were removed. While it is paramount to explore the effects of the movement on those whom it concerned, it is also crucial not to condemn those who sent them before determining the power of the popular beliefs and perceptions that possessed the child savers to implement such a policy in the first place. It is all too easy to view the philanthropists in a negative light simply by assessing the consequences of their actions, rather than their intentions and motivations. To be sure not to underestimate the power of ideas permeating Victorian society, it is necessary to examine the personalities and institutions which implemented emigration policies to determine the extent to which their behaviour was affected by prevailing attitudes and circumstances. Following is a close biographical account of the principal player in emigration schemes, Thomas Barnardo, which serves to illuminate his historical importance in the context of the child-saving movement, and to unveil the various factors which moved him to carry out such a policy. Also, historians have largely neglected, or have simply touched upon, the trans-Atlantic policy interactions which were the

foundation of the movement. At the time the emigration schemes were executed, emigration appeared to offer solutions to problems in both countries, yet two opposing value systems were at work in Britain and Canada, revealing the movement as inherently flawed and significantly affecting the reception and treatment of children overseas. It is necessary to analyze these contradictory ideals and attitudes in order to better understand the juvenile emigration movement in general.

Chapter Two: A Biographical Assessment of Thomas John Barnardo

To understand the context of the child-saving movement and to grasp what moved child rescue workers to implement schemes of juvenile emigration, it is important to provide a close, balanced biographical account of one of the movement's key players in order to comprehend the motives and intentions of a prominent reformer to determine the role they play in historical events. Increasingly, historians have recognized the value of stressing the private life of the subject, tracing the development from childhood to maturity, as well as the public career. From this perspective, the personal development of important historical figures becomes a valid subject of enquiry in its own right. Knowing more about the dominant personalities who championed and executed emigration procedures, about their familial background, early childhood, social values and religious convictions, helps to make the achievement of such a severe scheme more comprehensible. A prominent social reformer and medical missionary, Thomas John Barnardo was recognized foremost for his child emigration activities and for the children's homes that he established. A biographical evaluation of Barnardo reveals a man shaped by the experiences of his early childhood years, impelled by the uncertainty in his life – determined to be in public view, yet prompted both by conservative evangelical fervour and the experience of his own conversion -- to recast the state of destitute children.

Before delving into the episodes of Barnardo's life that moved him towards child-saving activities, and the subsequent result of these motivations in terms of his work for children, it is necessary to explore his familial background in order to help to place

Barnardo in the context of the child saving movement. In The Memoirs, the authors claim that the Barnardo family was of Spanish origin, with a segment descending from Venice, where in the fifteenth century, headed by Count John Barnardo, the family was very prominent, owning palaces in several Italian cities.¹ Edgar Samuel, an authority of the day on English-Jewish genealogy, suspects the Spanish/Venetian origins, believing them to be "an attempt to raise the social standing of a rather humble family."² Instead, Samuel observes that both the name of Thomas Barnardo's father, Michaelis, and his trade as a furrier, suggest Ashkenazi Jewish origin.³ His father, John Michaelis Barnardo, had married twice, both brides from the O'Brien family, Thomas being the ninth child of the second marriage.⁴ Little else is known about the parents of Thomas Barnardo, John

¹Syrie Barnardo and James Marchant, Memoirs of the Late Dr. Barnardo, (London: Hodder and Stoughton), 1. On page 2 of her biography, Barnardo, Wagner doubts the Spanish origin and states that it is, however, interesting that Barnardo believed that his family originated in Spain, and, as Lutherans, were driven from the country by the Spanish Inquisition in 1650. Wagner also denies the Venetian ancestry since Barnardo himself made no claim to noble Italian heritage, instead tracing his family to Germany and Russia, his descent being from the former. This seems to accord most accurately with the limited number of known facts.

²Gillian Wagner, Barnardo, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979), 2.

³Donald Ford, Dr. Barnardo, (London, Adam and Charles Black, 1958), 9. See also Wagner, Barnardo, 1. On page 2, Wagner claims that there is a possibility that Syrie was aware of the Jewish heritage which she concealed beneath her insistence of Spanish and Italian origins. This can clearly be seen as another attempt to create an illusion surrounding Barnardo's background, so as to create a man of impeccable breeding.

⁴Ford, 9. See also A.F. Young and E.T. Ashton, British Social Work in the Nineteenth Century, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1956), 129. John Michaelis married Thomas's mother, Abigail Matilda, on 23 June, 1837. In the biography co-authored by Syrie Barnardo and James Marchant, the former has deliberately omitted the O'Briens, adopting the more Protestant sounding name of the maternal grandmother, Drinkwater, likely due to the prevalence of the strong dislike Irish Protestant felt for Roman Catholics. This sort of omission exemplifies the tendency among prominent people of the past to hide, embellish, or falsify certain aspects or events of their life. In this case, it is likely that Syrie was trying to conceal the fact that there was Roman Catholicism in Thomas's background, making it appear as though Thomas was born of pure Protestant stock.

Michaelis Barnardo and Abigail O'Brien, except that the former was born in Havelberg, Germany in 1800, and was thirty-seven years of age when he married Abigail. He was a Prussian subject thought to have arrived in Ireland in 1823 after spending some years travelling following the French invasion of Hamburg which resulted in disaster for Hamburg merchants such as Barnardo.⁵ After arriving in Ireland, John Michaelis Barnardo joined the Anglican church. Abigail was a Catholic who concealed her Catholicism by posing as a Quaker.⁶

At the time of Thomas's birth in Dublin on 4 July 1845, John Michaelis Barnardo was supposed to have been of relatively wealthy status, having made money as a furrier and by successful investments in the Wicklow and Wexford Railway Company.⁷ However, shortly before Thomas was born, the railway company went bankrupt and John was said to have lost a large sum of money, leaving his family comparatively poor. Realistically, the Barnardo family was not wealthy, but was rather of middle-class origins, having experienced some economic decline in 1845.⁸ The exact amount that Barnardo's family lost in the railway has been a matter of controversy, with Barnardo claiming that his father lost significantly more than he actually did. The family was never wealthy and the figures

⁵Wagner, Barnardo, 1.

⁶Gertrude Himmelfarb, Poverty and Compassion, (New York: Vintage, 1992), 230.

⁷Wagner, Barnardo, 7. For details on Barnardo's birth place and circumstances, see Gladys Williams, Barnardo: The Extraordinary Doctor, (Toronto: Macmillan, 1966), 5. Also, Barnardo and Marchant, 1.

⁸Norman Wymer, Father of Nobody's Children: A Portrait of Dr. Barnardo, (London: Hutchinson, 1954), 9. See also, Wagner, Barnardo, 7. On pages 156-57, Wagner demonstrates that Barnardo claims that his father lost £40,000, while the Charity Organization Society countered the amount stating that the total investment was only £75, and that no more than £61 was lost in 1845.

were embellished in order to increase their social standing. Barnardo seems to have been obsessed with social standing, often misrepresenting his personal history, and exaggerating his forebears' affluence. Promoting and implementing massive emigration schemes, and the recognition and notoriety such endeavours engendered seems to have accorded with Barnardo's preoccupation with social status.

The key determinants in Barnardo's life in terms of child rescue work can be summed up as Barnardo's educational experiences, his religious conversion and convictions, and his desire to be in the public eye. Barnardo's school days affected his future endeavour. At the age of ten, he was sent to a parish school in Dublin, presided over by a curate he did not like, and where he was remembered by his fellow students as indifferent, thoughtless, and troublesome. When he began school, he found himself having an inadequate physique for excelling at games, and attracted attention by being the smallest and loudest boy in class.⁹ When he reached his teen years, he was sent to St. Patrick's Grammar School, which he also disliked, remembering the master as the most cruel man he had ever met. The strong memories of this man remained in Barnardo's adult mind, shaping his personality and influencing his treatment of children. Owing to this early experience, he detested cruelty and went to the opposite extreme.¹⁰

Religion figured significantly in Barnardo's life and predisposed him to a life of philanthropy. Religion had always played a crucial part in the Barnardo home. John Michaelis, though less strict than his wife, held office at St. Andrew's Church, which was

⁹Williams, 13-14.

¹⁰J. Wesley Bready, Doctor Barnardo: Physician. Pioneer. Prophet. (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1930), 49.

part of the Church of Ireland in the Anglican communion and where Thomas Barnardo was baptized. Both parents attended church every Sunday, filling the rest of the week with prayers and hymns, demanding their children's participation.¹¹ Barnardo was raised with the strong religious influence of both his Protestant father and Quaker mother. However, despite this strong religious influence, there was a time in Barnardo's life when religion played no role at all. Barnardo's intense dislike for school was relieved in his love of books and the works of the politically radical writers. When Barnardo reached age seventeen, he declared himself an agnostic, seeking comfort in the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, and Thomas Paine.¹²

In the mid-nineteenth century, the evangelical movement swept through Ireland, England, and Scotland, enveloping many followers and significantly determining Barnardo's future work. Within the Anglican church the evangelical movement was :

concerned to professionalize the clergy, to emphasize its moral superiority to the lay world of the flesh, and its responsibilities to other classes than that of its patrons. In reviving the Church's claims to speak to and for the whole nation, and in carrying their missions into the slums of the great towns, the Evangelical movement went beyond her traditional role as the conscience of the rich, and made her for the first time since the Reformation, to a limited extent at least, an independent force of moral and social reform.¹³

The term 'evangelical' was usually used to describe "those Protestants who believe that the essential part of the Gospel consists in salvation by faith through the atoning death of

¹¹Wymer, 15. See also Bready, 49.

¹²E.J.D. Rogers, Thomas Barnardo 1845-1905: The Children's Friend, (London: Church Book Room Press Ltd., n.d.), 6-7. See also Wymer, 16.

¹³Harold Perkin, The Origins of Modern English Society 1780-1880, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 282.

Christ."¹⁴ Philanthropy formed an essential part of evangelical philosophy, even though evangelical beliefs were based on conversion -- an experience encouraging faith rather than good works as a means to salvation. Religious conversion was defined by the philosopher, William James in a lecture delivered at Edinburgh University: "the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self, hitherto divided and consciously wrong, inferior or unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right, superior and happy in consequence of its firmer hold upon religious realities."¹⁵ An important element of conversion involved a system of charitable social work to demonstrate the spirit of Christ by remedying the suffering of the poor, since it was futile to preach in hopes of conversion to those who were poor and hungry. The primary goal of the evangelicals was concern for the state of the soul, and since each individual soul had value, their consequent duty was to bring salvation to all regardless of their social standing.¹⁶

Although reluctantly and with initial indifference, Barnardo gradually came under the power of the evangelical sphere of influence. In April of 1862, Barnardo along with his brothers, George and Frederick, already enthusiastically converted, hesitantly attended a private meeting at the home of a Dublin lawyer, William Fry. Having been deeply moved by Fry's kind reaction to his ignorant outbursts of disbelief, Barnardo stated: "I began to

¹⁴Kathleen Heasman, Evangelicals in Action: An Appraisal of their Social Work in the Victorian Era, (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962), 15.

¹⁵William James, Varieties of Religious Experience: Being the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion Delivered at Edinburgh 1901-1902, (London: Harvard University Press, (London: Harvard University Press, 1985), 157. This work was first published in 1902, after James (1842-1910) delivered a series of twenty lectures at Edinburgh University on various aspects of religious experience.

¹⁶Heasman, 16-23.

see that there was some reality in the revival movement...but Satan was determined not to lose a soul without a severe struggle, and he roused in my mind of the inspiration of God's Holy Word....This struggle was kept up in my mind for at least a month."¹⁷ The struggle that Barnardo referred to climaxed a month later when on 26 May 1862, Barnardo attended another meeting with his brothers to hear a speech given by a once immoral actor, John Hambleton.¹⁸ Although Barnardo was moved by the story of Hambleton's conversion, his actual transformation came from the influence of his two brothers begging him to accept his "free and full salvation."¹⁹ Barnardo's conversion was the pivotal event that changed the whole direction of his life. Religious training was the cardinal point from the beginning and remained the foundation of his work.

It should be noted that Barnardo's work was never affiliated with any established church -- a characteristic common to numerous child saving agencies of evangelical nature. However, despite this explicit non-affiliation, implicitly Barnardo was deeply Brethren in terms of religious perspectives due to his earlier conversion. In England, evangelicalism was revived in the eighteenth century by preachers outside the Church of England. They were united in their opposition to and apprehension about the increasing influence of Roman Catholicism and Tractarianism, rationalism and the theories of evolution, which seemed to undermine the literal truth of the Bible; they rejected the need for an ordained

¹⁷Wymer, 18.

¹⁸Wymer, 19. See also Barnardo and Marchant, 10. 26 May 1862 was the date that Barnardo recorded in his Bible as the date of his conversion. Barnardo had attended several religious meetings before this date, but remained a non-believer.

¹⁹Kenneth Bagnell, The Little Immigrants: The Orphans Who Came to Canada, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1980), 99.

ministry and formal theological training; and encouraged the simplicity of the early church typified in unceremonious sacramental occasions. Their solidarity was demonstrated in the exchange of pulpits and open-air preaching and the religious meetings they all attended. The prominent evangelical societies at the dawn of the nineteenth century were interdenominational, as was the Evangelical Alliance, formed in 1846 to unite Evangelicals around the world. It is not surprising then, that the majority of the voluntary societies formed in the mid-nineteenth century by evangelicals for social rescue were also not affiliated with any established church. The reasoning behind this can be explained in the fact that different denominations respectively appealed to certain social classes: the Evangelical Church of England and the Plymouth Brethren, consisted mostly of the middle class; the congregationalists and Presbyterians, embracing an intellectual philosophy, appealed to those in trade and industry and the lower ranks of the professions; the Baptists and Methodists, located largely in the poorer areas, attracted large numbers of the working class.²⁰ Barnardo likely formed organizations of an interdenominational nature in order to guarantee a wider range of participation and support.

Evidence of Barnardo's conversion and his direct relationship to the religious influence is everywhere apparent. In February of 1866, four years after his conversion, Barnardo witnessed a speech delivered by Hudson Taylor of the China Inland Mission. Taylor's presentation of a heathen China sparked Barnardo's interests and he offered himself for service in China. In April of the same year, Barnardo travelled to London to begin training for missionary work.²¹ However, at the insistence of Hudson Taylor,

²⁰Heasman, 15-17.

Barnardo's plans changed to include medical training, and he enrolled at the London Hospital in Whitechapel as a medical student.²²

As a medical student, Barnardo's impression upon his associates was not positive. He was revolted by the pranks characteristic of medical freshmen, and his religious enthusiasm made him unusually mature and serious.²³ His contemporaries disdained his religious excesses and his preaching in the streets, and began to talk of him as a crank to be shunned as a discredit to the hospital.²⁴ Nevertheless, in 1869, Barnardo passed his final medical exams and was made a Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh. He registered as a London practitioner and styled himself 'Doctor'.²⁵

As a student, Barnardo had been greatly involved in extending his services during the cholera epidemic of 1866, which paved the way for his life's work.²⁶ Barnardo's evangelicalism and work during the cholera outbreak is very significant, bringing him into regular contact with the poverty that existed, marking an important transition where the direction of his work changed from a medical/missionary nature to focus on child-saving activities. Horrified by the way children were left to fend for themselves, wandering the

²¹Bagnell, 101.

²²Rogers, 10. In The Memoirs, page 32 clarifies that Barnardo did not actually attend medical school until November 1867, when at such time he passed the entrance exam.

²³Bready, 67. See also Wagner, Barnardo, 40.

²⁴W.T. Stead, "Dr. Barnardo: The Father of Nobody's Children," Review of Reviews, Vol 14 (July-December 1896):26. See also Wagner, Barnardo, 41.

²⁵Wymer, 70. On page 135, Bready notes that few medical men had the legal entitlement to be styled 'Doctor', since few of them took the M.D. Degree. Barnardo gave himself the title long before receiving his British qualification.

²⁶Bready, 67.

streets, poorly clothed and ill-fed, Barnardo, along with a few fellow students, planned a crusade on behalf of the children.²⁷ Barnardo's work with children reflected the beginning of a new phase in the history of relationships between philanthropists and the children of the poor.

Barnardo began his crusade in London as he had in Dublin, teaching at a ragged school: "My own rescue work...sprang out of the Ragged School."²⁸ The Ragged School movement in England spanned the period from 1840-1870, aiming to convert and civilize the urban poor. The schools were aimed at the segment of the juvenile population that was not yet touched by any other institution. The Ragged School curriculum consisted primarily of the Scriptures, reading, writing, and basic arithmetic. The purpose was not to provide the children with an outstanding secular education, but rather a technical preparation for life.²⁹ Barnardo credited the Ragged School with the subsequent development of such philanthropic agencies as education facilities, homes, and institutions: "The R.S.U. has contained within it the germ which has led to the establishment of most of these useful and beneficial agencies now labouring on behalf of neglected children and of which we are so justly proud."³⁰ Barnardo was later promoted to superintendent of the Ernest Street School, a position that was short-lived since it was not long before the committee questioned Barnardo's appropriation of school finances, leading

²⁷Wymer, 46-7.

²⁸Rogers, 22.

²⁹H.W. Schupf, "Education for the Neglected: Ragged Schools in Nineteenth Century England," History of Education Quarterly, 12 (Summer 1972): 162-65.

³⁰C.J. Montague, Sixty Years in Waifdom Or. The Ragged School Movement in English History, (London: Chas. Murray and Co., 1904), 241.

to his resignation.³¹

After resigning, Barnardo established the East End Juvenile Mission in 1868, at Hope Place, Stepney – a mission which proved to be the foundation of the Barnardo Homes, and a calling that occupied him far more than the study of medicine. The East End Mission was a ragged school to children by day and a preaching hall to congregations by night.³² It involved segregation of the sexes while providing sewing classes for girls, trade training for boys, employment placement in local businesses, inexpensive meals, and bible classes.³³

In order to maintain the juvenile mission, Barnardo appealed to the British public for funds, using the vehicles of journalism and sermons. However, the funds he raised were insufficient and Barnardo always struggled to make ends meet. During this time, Barnardo struggled with whether he should continue his missionary work in London or take up work in China. His indecision ended in the summer of 1868, when Samuel Smith, M.P., through the influence of Lord Shaftesbury, a leading evangelical philanthropist and one of the most influential figures in the history of social reform, offered Barnardo £1000 to continue his rescue work in the East End.³⁴

Using the finances from donations, preaching engagements, and publishing stories,

³¹Wagner, *Barnardo*, 24. The questioning of finances can be seen as characteristic and part of a recurring pattern of behaviour with Barnardo.

³²Wymer, 51. Bagnell, 104.

³³Wymer, 67, 70.

³⁴Wymer, 69. On page 102, Bagnell clarifies that Barnardo was later rejected as a candidate for the China mission because of his personal style and religious convictions. He was too self-centered and tyrannical, and his religious perspectives, so deeply Brethren, made him unwilling to submit to any form of church authority.

Barnardo extended his work, starting a school for destitute boys at 18 Stepney Causeway, in the fall of 1870.³⁵ Stepney Causeway proved to be more than a preaching-teaching centre, and was an actual home run by a 'mother' and 'father'.³⁶ Barnardo based his work at Stepney on the family system and on the power of a new environment: "If children of the slums can be removed from their surroundings early enough and can be sufficiently long under training, heredity counts for little, environment counts for everything."³⁷ This philosophy about the benefits of a healthy, moral environment was central to the rhetoric of the child emigration movement, and will be given greater attention in the next chapter. Stepney Causeway was not a permanent home however, the average stay of the boys being only about twelve months.³⁸

Though Stepney could house sixty, finances allowed for only twenty-five children, a limit to which Barnardo initially strictly abided, until a tragedy made him abandon his worry about debt. Barnardo, a firm follower of the philosophies of Brethrenism, initially adhered to the principle of "owe no man anything", which was deeply part of evangelical tendencies.³⁹ A young waif, John Somers, nicknamed 'Carrots', pleaded with Barnardo to take him into the Home when all twenty-five places had already been filled. Barnardo

³⁵Ford, 21. See also Frances Hobbs, "The British Child Migration Movement: An Early Anglo-Canadian Experiment in Juvenile Delinquency Prevention," Master of Criminology Thesis, University of Ottawa, 1986, 37.

³⁶Wymer, 73.

³⁷Jean S. Heywood, "Changing Responses, 1870-1970," Services for Children and Their Families: Aspects of Child Care for Social Workers, ed., John Stroud, (Toronto: Pergamon Press, 1973), 5.

³⁸T.J. Barnardo, Something Attempted. Something Done, (London: 1889), 52.

³⁹Wagner, Barnardo, 169.

turned the young boy away, promising him the next vacancy. However, a few days later, John Somers was found dead from exhaustion and starvation. From that point, Barnardo adopted the motto "No Destitute Child Ever Refused Admittance."⁴⁰ Another principle that Barnardo embraced was that all children, regardless of their creed, nationality, or physical malady, were eligible for admission.⁴¹

The purpose of the Barnardo Home was not only to provide shelter and religious instruction, but also to serve as an alternative to the evil influences of the common lodging houses. Not only did the children need redemption from spiritual ignorance, but also from the consequences of living on the streets. Barnardo feared for the morality of the children, viewing the evils of society as "overcrowding, the drink curse, the condition of the lodging houses and the peculiar evils which fester within them."⁴² Believing in the notion that idleness nurtured sin, Barnardo arranged the daily programme at Stepney so that there was no time for leisure. The programme consisted of training in a skill, physical education, moral guidance, and instruction in household duties.⁴³

Barnardo continued to campaign for contributions in the pulpit and the press. In 1873, he more than doubled his proceeds from the previous year, making over £15,000. The money did not go towards improving the care of the existing homes, but to expanding his work. In addition to Stepney, Barnardo began operating free schools, Sunday schools, preaching missions, and his own church at Edinburgh Castle, where he served coffee to

⁴⁰Wymer, 75.

⁴¹Wagner, Barnardo, 308.

⁴²Barnardo, Something, 14.

⁴³Wagner, Barnardo, 53.

working men during the week and preached to crowds on Sundays.⁴⁴ The acquisition of Edinburgh Castle was Barnardo's first major success: bringing him public recognition and establishing a solid foundation for his work, making him known to a wider scope of people. The development of this mission church also displayed some of the conflicting aspects of Barnardo's personality. Despite his strong religious tenets and dedication to the principles of evangelicalism, Barnardo hungered for worldly acclaim and wanted to have his work acknowledged. His natural arrogance found a new base and his newly acquired belief that his life was to be a channel for God's work reinforced these qualities.⁴⁵ Barnardo's restless pursuit of success and natural gift for publicity were somewhat out of keeping with the evangelical tradition of the times.

Barnardo's work on the streets of England made him conscious of the prevalence of destitute girls. Despite the recognized difficulties that might arise from a single man working with young girls, Barnardo began planning a home for destitute girls. His work was fostered in 1873, when he married Syrie Louise Elmslie, daughter of an affluent businessman and enthusiastic evangelist.⁴⁶ They were married at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington Causeway in south London, where the ceremony was officiated by Barnardo's friend and teacher from Dublin, Grattan Guinness.⁴⁷

Barnardo never missed an opportunity to solicit, using the event of his wedding to

⁴⁴Bagnell, 113-14. Edinburgh Castle provided the public with a library, reading and smoking room, newspapers, and hot drinks.

⁴⁵Wagner, Barnardo, 62.

⁴⁶Wagner, Barnardo, 73. The exact date of the marriage was 17 June 1873, when Barnardo was almost twenty-eight years of age.

⁴⁷Barnardo and Marchant, 114.

publicize and gain support for his work. He invited individuals from both the upper and lower levels of society, not only emphasizing the breadth of his friendship, but also ensuring support from all orders. His publicity tactics were successful in gathering support as Mr. John Sands, a wealthy lawyer sharing Barnardo's Brethren beliefs, donated a fifteen-year lease of Mossford Lodge at Barkingside, where the Barnardos resided and which became the future site of a home for girls.⁴⁸

After an unsuccessful attempt to submit the girls to the same type of barrack-style living as the boys of Stepney, both Barnardo and his new wife canvassed for funds to establish a village-type home. Support for the home flourished in 1875, and income for that year amounted to over £23,000 -- a grand sum that did not go unnoticed by those who were sceptical of Barnardo's work.⁴⁹ It was not until 9 July 1876, that the Girls' Village Home, consisting of thirteen cottages, was opened.⁵⁰ Each cottage was headed by a Christian mother who was in charge of fifteen to sixteen young girls.⁵¹ Similar to the activities of the boys, the girls were responsible for contributing to the running of the Homes -- cooking, cleaning, sewing, and nursing.⁵² The Memoirs indicate that during the twenty-nine years from its inception until Barnardo's death, the Village Home welcomed and trained 8700 children.⁵³

⁴⁸Wagner, Barnardo, 77.

⁴⁹Ibid., 86.

⁵⁰Rogers, 18-19. In 1888, the number of cottages increased to fifty.

⁵¹Young and Ashton, 130.

⁵²A.R. Neuman, Dr. Barnardo As I Knew Him, (London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1914), 16.

⁵³Barnardo and Marchant, 126.

Barnardo's character -- ambitious, egocentric, dominant, and authoritarian -- worked against him in terms of the excess of support that he received for the Homes. The success and subsequent overconfidence that Barnardo attained blinded him to the dangers of jealous rivals. Unwisely, Barnardo announced that he was solely in charge of funds committed to his trust, not having to answer to any organized form of financial authority.⁵⁴ There were many other socially-concerned individuals among the East End who resented Barnardo's determination and autocracy as a result of his new found affluence and power, and set out to destroy his reputation. Consequently, Barnardo was plunged into a three year controversy that formed a counterpoint to his progress and, for its duration, proved to be damaging both to himself and to the evangelical revival movement as a whole.

The controversy charged him with having resided, before his marriage, with a woman who earned her living as a prostitute; with dishonesty in his handling of funds; with deception in his title of 'Doctor'; and with cruelty in his treatment of children. The controversy began with a fellow missionary over the relatively minor matter of the location of their respective missions. Frederick Charrington, an evangelical born to wealth who renounced his inheritance to take up with the revival movement, was feeling increasingly threatened by Barnardo's success and decision to open a second coffee-house in an area of London that Charrington, because his family's business had been there for years, regarded as his territory. In that area, Charrington had previously established such similar programs to Barnardo's as a school, a mission, and a home for destitute boys.⁵⁵ Depending on local

⁵⁴Wagner, Barnardo, 87.

⁵⁵Bagnell, 118. It should be noted that Charrington was also a member of the Charity Organization Society.

funds for support, Charrington feared that such funds would be swallowed up by the competition of the charismatic appeal of Thomas Barnardo. Charrington was not alone in his resentment of Barnardo. George Reynolds, a railway worker turned Baptist minister, was also apprehensive about Barnardo's invasion of the East End, perceiving him as a threat to his tiny congregation. These two men shared their concerns, combined their grievances, and sought to dishonour Barnardo publicly.⁵⁶

The concerns of these private individuals were accompanied by those of the Charity Organization Society (COS). Founded in 1869, the COS claimed "the job of overseeing all work among the poor, and in particular, defining the roles for local government and for private agencies such as Thomas Barnardo's."⁵⁷ The organization consisted of well-established men and women fearing that the work of private charities, in terms of their indiscriminate charity, would undermine the Poor Law. They believed that free giving would inspire among the poor a system of using the charities to avoid work, resulting in an increase in the pauper population.⁵⁸ Essentially, the controversy that began as one between East End missionary leaders, escalated to a struggle between the leaders of the evangelical movement and the Charity Organization Society for the right to oversee the breadth of the charitable voluntary movement. The controversy, which developed into the Arbitration Case of 1877 and eventually restored public confidence, was a pivotal event in Barnardo's life, transforming him from a locally-recognized independent missionary into a nationally-known public figure. The outcome of the case was a significant triumph for the

⁵⁶Wagner, Barnardo, 87-8.

⁵⁷Bagnell, 120.

⁵⁸Ibid., 120.

evangelicals, bringing Barnardo and his work, and in turn, evangelical philanthropic motives to the forefront of Christian charitable work

In 1874, accusations against Barnardo spread throughout the East End of London. The first rumour involved the allegation that before Barnardo married, he had an illicit affair with a woman, known only as Mrs. Johnson, with whom he lived as medical student; she apparently earned a living as a prostitute. The scandal was disseminated throughout the East End of London in the form of letters and tracts and was phrased "Barnardo and the Wicked Woman."⁵⁹

Another attack launched against Barnardo accused him of engineering a system of finance designed to permit the embezzlement of funds. Reynolds suggested that: "Barnardo was not a philanthropist so much as a profiteer, lining his pockets from the misery of children and the generosity of supporters."⁶⁰ Reynolds drew attention to the fact that Barnardo's homes were lacking any formal form of financial management and administration. Barnardo's authoritarian rule and appetite for independence were proving to be detrimental to his work. Both contemporaries and historians have insinuated that Barnardo's interest in child-saving was heightened by the hope of increased social standing and financial gain. According to Bagnell, Thomas Barnardo's ambition "had about it an air of vanity and excess, as if in some part of himself he was seeking, not so much the welfare of the homeless, as the power of achievement and fame."⁶¹ As aforementioned, asserting that Barnardo might have been driven to child rescue, in part, by perceived elevation of

⁵⁹Bagnell, 120-21.

⁶⁰Ibid., 122.

⁶¹Ibid., 117.

social and financial status, does not seem to be unreasonable speculation, since Thomas Barnardo, as well as others in the Barnardo family, show an obsession with social standing, often misrepresenting their history in order to make it appear more illustrious.

A third attack on Barnardo's integrity involved his right to the title of 'Doctor'. In the early 1870s Barnardo was not a physician, since he had not yet written his final exams. He did not have a medical degree, and used the title without legally being permitted to do so. In 1876 Barnardo received his medical diploma from Edinburgh University, allowing him to be styled 'Doctor' by courtesy.⁶² Nonetheless, the fact that he used a title not belonging to him was regarded by the public as deliberate deception.

A final issue involved the questioning of Barnardo's treatment of children. Reynolds claimed that Barnardo abducted children from their parents and, while in his care, subjected them to cruelty. Rumours circulated that he confined children in dark, solitary cells, and fed them poorly.⁶³ Reynolds also criticized Barnardo's use of 'before and after' photographs, whereby he dressed children in rags to exhibit their impoverished state upon admission to the homes, and later displayed them happily at work in a trade. This practice was thought to be damaging to the children's already low esteem. The photographs also formed part of the rival missionaries' accusations about Barnardo's misappropriation of funds since Barnardo sold the photographs as decks of cards in order

⁶²Barnardo and Marchant, 147. Only those with a medical degree were legally entitled to use the designation 'Doctor', although as a matter of courtesy, this was applied to all medical practitioners, and as a matter of custom was used by most of them.

⁶³Ibid., 142. The practice of taking children from their parents was termed "philanthropic abduction" by Barnardo and deals more with his emigration practices. It will be dealt with in greater detail in the following chapter.

to raise funds. The photos were often posed and the children were made to appear worse than they actually were.⁶⁴

On 11 September 1876, the controversy was transformed from a local squabble into a national event, marking the beginning of what has been termed the 'newspaper warfare'. The controversy consisted of a series of letters, published in local East End newspapers, written under pseudonyms, alleged to be a battle between Barnardo and Reynolds, the former writing under the name of "Clerical Junius." The authorship of the letters became central to the upcoming Arbitration Case, inflaming the entire controversy.⁶⁵ In addition to the newspaper publications, the most important text presented by Reynolds to discredit Barnardo was "Dr. Barnardo's Homes; Startling Revelations", which he sold throughout London. This work set forth the numerous aforementioned charges against Barnardo, and most importantly revealed that Barnardo was indeed responsible for the authorship of the Clerical Junius letters, having dictated them to Frederick Fielder, one of his clerks. The revelation that Barnardo was behind the letters damaged his public image and distressed many wealthy and generous supporters.⁶⁶

Among those disturbed was John Sands, the wealthy evangelical who had supported Barnardo despite his excessively ambitious style. As Barnardo's largest contributor, Sands recognized that the homes had grown beyond the capability of one man and insisted that Barnardo install a board of trustees to which he would be responsible,

⁶⁴Alan Trachtenberg, "The Camera and Dr. Barnardo," *Aperture*, 19 No. 4 (1975): 73. This article deals in depth with Barnardo's use of photography.

⁶⁵Wagner, *Barnardo*, 91-2.

⁶⁶Bagnell, 125.

fearing that Barnardo's style would disgrace the evangelical cause. Earl Cairns, Lord Chancellor, offered to become president of the homes, and a strong committee was formed under him. The board demanded complete honesty from Barnardo and insisted that he answer to all accusations. The trustees were already aware that the apparent incident with Mrs. Johnson was false, as the accusations had already been investigated by some members of the board, exposing her as a "hysterical and unstable woman".⁶⁷ In terms of Barnardo's use of funds, a group of auditors was called in only to find "in his books meticulous records of no fewer than sixteen thousand separate donations, ranging from those of a few pennies to a couple that were over two thousand pounds. The auditor's report was unqualified: 'Examined the books and found correct'.⁶⁸ The trustees recommended that Barnardo take official public action in order to clear himself of the charges against him to re-establish the merits of his work and the evangelical cause in general. Sands and the Board of Trustees brought matters to a formal hearing known as the Arbitration Case of 1877.⁶⁹

On 11 June 1877, the Arbitration Case opened with three men hearing the evidence, investigating the homes, and executing a decision regarding Barnardo's character and the principles of his work.⁷⁰ Barnardo was represented by the Honourable Alfred Thesiger, an excellent lawyer famous for his mastery of detail. Reynold's representation, John Wonter, paled in comparison to the reputation of Barnardo's defence. In twenty-

⁶⁷Ibid., 125-6. See also Rogers, 19.

⁶⁸Ibid., 128.

⁶⁹Ibid., 128.

⁷⁰Bready, 145.

seven days, Wonter called forty-seven witnesses, most of whom were boys who had been expelled from the homes, former employees who had been dismissed, or parents who claimed that Barnardo had abducted their children. Thesiger called upon sixty-five witnesses on behalf of Barnardo. The case for Reynolds was unsuccessful as many of the best witnesses were proved to be disreputable.⁷¹ The issue of the authorship of the Clerical Junius letters became the centre of the case, as Barnardo refused to reveal the identity of the author. The court adjourned because it was not making any progress; the lawyers presented their summations, and the hearing came to a close.

It was not until 15 October 1877 that the arbitrators reached a verdict, delivered to Barnardo in a twenty-five page document concluding: "We are of the opinion that these Homes for Destitute Boys and Girls, called the Barnardo Institutions, are real and valuable charities, and worthy of public confidence and support."⁷² This ultimate decision was based on the following conclusions. On the issue of Barnardo's disposal of funds, all accusations were dismissed since there was no indication that any part of the donations was being expended by Barnardo for his personal use.⁷³ Regarding the ill-treatment, cruelty, lack of religious instruction, and insinuations that children suffered due to inferior food, improper cooking, and inadequate sanitary conditions, the charges were also dismissed. The arbitrators did condemn the length of time that Barnardo kept boys in solitary

⁷¹Wagner, Barnardo, 130. See also Bagnell, 129-30.

⁷²Bagnell, 136.

⁷³Barnardo and Marchant, 143. On page 157 of Barnardo, Wagner clarifies that although Barnardo was cleared on these charges, allegations made by the COS regarding his deceptive presentation of his father's wealth were never disproved. Barnardo had intentionally fabricated an illusion of family wealth that was baseless and non-existent.

confinement in order to discipline them. On the issue of deceptive photographs, or 'artistic fiction', the arbitrators were critical, stating that the photos were deceptive and morally wrong.⁷⁴ Barnardo was commanded to discontinue his use of pictures. With regard to the improper use of title, Barnardo was acquitted, since it was customary to refer to medical students as such, although bound by no legal right. The ruling on the crux of the case, the Clerical Junius letters, castigated both parties for their impropriety and purported that although Barnardo was not the actual writer, having dictated the facts, he was nonetheless morally responsible.⁷⁵

While the verdict of the Arbitration Case proved to be favourable in terms of the extent to which the evangelicals dominated the work of Christian philanthropy; and while bringing Barnardo into the forefront, it also burdened him with considerable debt. An important principle in the Brethren faith -- "owe no man anything" -- deeply influenced Barnardo's actions. The years proceeding the case witnessed Barnardo's abandonment of Brethren principles, so deeply conservative especially regarding ideas on debt, leading him to return to the Church of England. He came to believe that the public was responsible for his debt thus legitimizing fund-raising as a means not only of gaining monetary support, but also of making people realize their responsibility for the poor.⁷⁶ The years following the case witnessed a tremendous increase in the development of the homes and in the

⁷⁴Wagner, Barnardo, 159. Before the arbitration opinion was formulated, Barnardo had already abandoned the practice. During the case, Barnardo gave three reasons why he employed the use of photographs: to maintain a complete and thorough case history of each child, to make identification easier, and to appeal to the charitable.

⁷⁵Wagner, Barnardo, 160-61.

⁷⁶Wagner, Barnardo, 169.

implementation of new undertakings.

In 1882, financed by Samuel Smith, philanthropist and M.P. for Liverpool, Barnardo launched his massive scheme to send children to Canada. He had established close acquaintance with Annie Macpherson, who began emigration years earlier, and emulated her work closely. On 9 August 1882, a group of fifty-nine boys departed Liverpool on the 'Parisian', destined for Quebec City.⁷⁷ More than one third of the children sent to Canada during this period were sent under the sponsorship of Barnardo. The success Barnardo achieved, insofar as juvenile emigration can be viewed as a successful policy, was due to the fact that the work was executed according to specific regulations: the children were carefully chosen and trained before they departed for Canada and continued to be supervised after they had been established in Canadian homes with Barnardo making several trips overseas to investigate; the boarding-out costs of the younger children were subsidized by Barnardo; the staff of the various homes were carefully selected. From its inception, the juvenile emigration movement was criticized, but opposition to what had come to be viewed as flawed policy did not become constructive until the mid 1920s.⁷⁸

In 1901, Thomas Barnardo endured a severe setback owing to poor health. He was nearly fifty years of age when he started experiencing symptoms of illness. In the spring of that year he suffered a serious attack of angina pectoris, resulting in doctor's orders that he retreat to a health resort in Germany known as Nauheim.⁷⁹ The years between 1901 and

⁷⁷Bagnell, 142.

⁷⁸Bagnell, 142. See also Wagner, *Barnardo*, 237-38.

⁷⁹Ford, 88.

1905 involved repetitive retreats to Nauheim. At 5:45 in the evening of 19 September 1905, Barnardo died of a heart attack while under his wife's care.⁸⁰ His body was delivered to his mission hall in the East End at Edinburgh Castle. On 27 September, a funeral procession of thousands of Londoners honoured Barnardo. He was cremated and buried in Barkingside, on the land of the Ilford Girls' Village Home that he established in 1875.⁸¹

Thomas John Barnardo was a prominent reformer recognized primarily for his child rescue techniques and for the children's homes that he implemented. Understanding the private life of Barnardo – his motivations and intentions – as well as the public counterpart, is crucial to understanding the subject. Knowing more about a personality so dominant in the area of nineteenth-century social reform, about his claim to fame and historical importance in the context of the child saving movement analysed in the first chapter, helps to make the execution of such a radical policy more comprehensible. A close biographical examination of Barnardo's life and work exposes a man impelled by the circumstances of the first fifteen years of his life; inspired by the event of his religious conversion and subsequent evangelical philosophies; driven by his yearning for public recognition and notoriety and the paradoxical situation these latter two motivations presented, to recast the situation of destitute children. To comprehend the reasons why the policy of sending children overseas was untenable, it is necessary to make a transition from the personalities dominating the movement to the contradictory conceptions upon which emigration principles depended, and through which advocates and adversaries presented

⁸⁰Rogers, 26. Wagner, Barnardo, 291.

⁸¹Bagnell, 204.

their activities.

Chapter Three: A Trans-Atlantic Perspective on Juvenile Emigration

During the years between 1870 and 1930, more than eighty thousand poor children were shipped from Britain destined for Canada. They were known as the "home children," sent overseas by well-intentioned philanthropists to solve Britain's poverty problem, and to work as farm labourers and domestic servants. Since the juvenile emigration movement has been viewed largely from the Canadian context, that is, from the perspective of the children's situation in Canada, rather than from the perspective of the conditions the children were being removed from, the British philanthropists have increasingly been viewed in a negative light. Essentially, when assessing the child-savers' methods of care, what appears to have been overlooked are the circumstances out of which these philanthropists emerged. It is crucial to look at philanthropic activities less in terms of individual volition than as a response to various social, economic, and intellectual pressures. In the context of their time, the emigrationists were confident that their policy was both practically and philosophically sound. By studying the popular beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of late nineteenth-century Britain, and evaluating the theories through which proponents of emigration conceptualized their activities, it is evident that the consequences of these Victorian ideals culminated into a scheme which, in the nineteenth century, seemed both acceptable and workable, and must therefore be viewed within historical perspective.

In practical terms, emigration met the colony's demand for labour, while remedying Britain's overwhelming number of poor, destitute children. Theoretically, emigration expressed Victorian religious attitudes, notions of environmental heredity, the

ideal of the family, and theories of social imperialism. However British attitudes towards emigration met sharp contrast in Canada. Each country had diametrically different attitudes, leaving the young emigrants caught between two sets of values. Viewed in terms of the contradictions between British and Canadian values, child emigration becomes an intelligible, if not a justified method of child care in the nineteenth century. If juvenile emigration can presently be viewed as a defective policy, the imperfections were not so apparent in late nineteenth-century Britain, when the alternatives appeared so bleak.

Although the exportation of Britain's impoverished children began as early as the 1830s with the Children's Friend Society shipping children to Canada, and later to South Africa, large-scale strategies essentially commenced in the late 1860s with the work of Maria Rye and Annie Macpherson. Rye's work met increasing opposition as British authorities questioned the system of emigration as it was being operated. Macpherson, who began her work in 1870, experienced less criticism than her predecessor, and was ultimately responsible for influencing Thomas Barnardo, who took over her work and began an extensive emigration scheme -- one responsible for sending more children to Canada than any other private enterprise.¹

Before delving into the prevailing attitudes of Victorian Britain and conflicting British-Canadian values, it is necessary to discuss the predicament of nineteenth-century reformers, in terms of the lack of enthusiasm and support they received from the British government. An article by C. Kinloch Cooke, a member of parliament who championed

¹Frances Hobbs, "The British Child Emigration Movement: An Early Anglo-Canadian Experiment in Juvenile Delinquency Prevention", Master of Criminology thesis, University of Ottawa, (1986), 83. See also Joy Parr, Labouring Children: British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869-1924, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 30-35.

the cause of child emigration, entitled "The Emigration of State Children," helps to clarify this point. During the mid to late nineteenth century, private agencies carried the burden of finances, receiving little from the state in monetary terms. Cooke concurs that a small payment was made to private agencies to cover the cost of three months residence and maintenance in Canada. Other than this payment, no other money was provided after the child reached Canada, other than that given to the Canadian government to finance inspection.² Since the British government neglected to take responsibility for such an emigration policy, it was left to the philanthropists of the day to devise and implement their own emigration programs.

In an article entitled, "Emigration in the Nineteenth Century," contemporary Emile Levasseur expounds upon nineteenth-century emigration practices, stressing that since European governments of the day were taking much less part than earlier in fostering voluntary emigration, it was consequently left to private agencies and societies. Levasseur accounts for the increased wave of emigration during the nineteenth century, attributing it to the following influences: overpopulation due to excessive birth-rate; insufficiency of the means of subsistence in the mother country; the anticipation of alleviating their present position; political considerations, which made residence for certain sections of society impossible in the mother country; stimulation from private agencies to increase the flow of emigration, and the tendency of the country of destination to attract it.³

²C. Kinloche Cooke, "The Emigration of State Children," The Empire Review, 10 (1905): 212. In this weekly journal, Cooke presents his own scheme for the emigration of state children. He desires to implement a state-aided system that would pose less of a burden on private agencies.

³Emile Levasseur, "Emigration in the Nineteenth Century," Statistical Society Journal, XLVIII (1885), 65. Levasseur takes a somewhat global perspective, examining European emigration schemes. He does not make specific

The juvenile emigration movement remained largely unnoticed in Britain until some anxiety as to Poor Law children shipped to Canada resulted in government inspection. Cooke helped to classify state children, lending some understanding to which group of children the government wished to inspect, dividing them into two categories: those children committed to industrial schools under the charge of the Home Office, funded by the Treasury, local authorities, school boards, and public donations; and those in the category comprised of "orphans and children relieved without parents", falling under the jurisdiction of the Local Government Board and funded from local rate-payers.⁴ It was the latter of these two groups that fell under the scrutiny of the British government.

A series of reports presented before the British House of Commons between the years 1875 and 1877 further accentuate the situation of the reformers regarding lack of government support, while illustrating some of the misconceptions middle-class Britain had about the poor and Canada. Andrew Doyle, a senior official of the Local Government Board sent to Canada to inspect the system of emigration of pauper children to Canada under the supervision of Maria Rye and Annie Macpherson, presented an indictment of the system as it was operated. He criticized all aspects of the system, and in so doing, provided a reflection of British middle-class conceptions and fears of the poorer classes. The first point that he castigated dealt with the process of combining workhouse children with those of the streets. Doyle wished to see categorization of the children sent to Canada,

reference to juvenile emigration, but covers voluntary emigration in general. Perhaps a significant aspect of this document is its portrayal of the larger picture, which helps to contextualize juvenile emigration by unveiling other voluntary emigration trends and influences at work, making juvenile emigration appear as not so radical.

⁴ Cooke, 211.

demanding social classification based on the criterion of poverty in order to distinguish each individual child's nature and determine which children were suitable for emigration. He was a firm supporter of the workhouse system, viewing those children from the streets, 'gutter' children as they were termed, as "semi-criminals," who were detrimental to the entire scheme. Doyle maintained that in Canada, distinction should be made between these two types of children, and they should be distributed accordingly.⁵ This first point reveals not only the reluctance of the government to support such emigration schemes, but also the fear of the poorer classes that was common to Victorian Britain.

Another area of criticism included the ways in which the children, once in Canada, were placed out in private homes. He felt that these children were disposed of too quickly upon their entrance in Canada. Doyle charged that Rye and Macpherson did not look closely enough into the children's character, aptitude, or fitness for service. By the same token, Doyle claimed that these women did little investigating, and knew nothing about prospective employers and adoptive parents.⁶ He suggested that strict enquiries be made into the characters of those families requesting children.⁷ By extension, Doyle condemned the lack of supervision the children received once they were placed in Canadian homes.⁸

⁵Great Britain Parliamentary Papers, *Report to the Right Honourable the President of the Local Government Board, by Andrew Doyle, Esquire, Local Government Inspector, as to the emigration of pauper children to Canada, 1875* LXIII, p.4. In Elaine Hadley's article, "Natives in a Strange Land: The Philanthropic Discourse of Juvenile Emigration in Mid-Nineteenth Century England," she discusses Victorian efforts at social reform, focusing on child emigration, and discusses how the classification of poor children was used to distinguish the plethora of urban poor children, in order to determine their subsequent category or placement.

⁶Ibid., 14.

⁷Ibid., 20.

⁸Ibid., 14.

Doyle also found many faults with the distributing homes, from which the children were placed out. He commented on the lack of training the children received, the inadequate supervision, their failure to intervene in situations whereby the children were placed out and were unhappy with their situation, the poor food the children were served, and instances of cruelty and ill-treatment suffered by the children at the hands of those running the homes. He cited a case at one of the homes whereby a child was locked up in solitude for eleven days "upon bread and water, without book or work to divert her thoughts."⁹ Perhaps the most important aspect of this first report, filled with criticism of the existing system of emigration, is the fact that while government officials were quick to censure the existing system of juvenile emigration, they did not accept responsibility for the care of the poor, illuminating the context under which the philanthropists operated, and shedding light on their reasoning behind emigration.

In response to Doyle's report, Maria Rye presented a letter to the President of the Local Government Board, made public in May 1877. In defending her methods of emigration and placement, Rye revealed certain perceptions of Canada, as well as of the poorer classes, typical of middle-class England. Rye defended her inadequate supervision by stressing how favourable Canadian culture was to the reception of juvenile emigrants:

If you could only understand and realise the substantial, orderly, comfortable, and well-established class of people who are the custodians of these children in Canada you would the better understand the enormous boon you are placing within their reach, and why I think inspection of the children of comparatively so small moment, and the reason I have so largely used correspondence as a means of

⁹Ibid., 18.

oversight of the young people when placed out.¹⁰

In reply to Doyle's accusations of cruelty, Rye argued that these cases were exceptional not representative, justifying this occasional treatment as a response to those "returned for violent temper, laziness, insubordination, and tendencies to immorality (very petty larceny)."¹¹ Optimism permeated the reformers' ideologies. They feared only that the children would be treated too gently.¹² However, this ideal stood in sharp contrast to the work ethic of the Canadian farmer, with whom the children were placed. Canadian farmers worked long, hard hours, demanding the same of their families as well as hired hands, in order to maximize production. Rye displayed another misconception common to British middle classes -- that the children of the poorer classes were tainted. She suggested that difficult children, those with "strongly marked characters and developments," could find a suitable place only in Canada, since in England, failure in a situation doomed a child at a young age, making future placement in respectable service impossible.¹³ From this evidence, it is clear that in addition to illustrating the lack of enthusiasm the British government displayed towards the juvenile emigration movement, the debate between

¹⁰Great Britain Parliamentary Papers, *Copy of Letter addressed by Miss Rye to the President of the Local Government Board, referred to in Mr Doyle's Reply thereto, of the 14th day of May last, already presented, 1877 LXXI*, p.1.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 3.

¹²*Ibid.*, 6.

¹³*Ibid.*, 3. There is a third report in this series, written by Doyle in response to Rye's letter. At this point, the correspondence appears more as a personal debate. In this reply, Doyle draws a distinction between Rye's work and that of Macpherson -- something that he had not previously done. As if to spite Rye, Doyle notes the improvements Macpherson has made to the system. After Doyle's indictment, Rye's work was temporarily silenced and was overshadowed by the work of Macpherson, and later, Barnardo. While emigration to Canada was greatly lessened throughout the 1870s, it increased substantially in the 1880s, as the number of chronic poor in the British industrial centres grew.

Doyle and Rye preserved in the British Parliamentary Papers shows some of the common misconceptions permeating British thought, and reveals contradictions between British and Canadian values.

Motivations influencing these child-saving philanthropists were deeply ingrained in the ideology of the Victorian period, and are valid expressions of the social temper of the period. The reformers were drawn from the middle class, and consequently the philanthropic impulse behind child emigration schemes was coloured by the ideological assumptions and class anxieties of its benefactors. The economic circumstances in which Britain found herself in the second half of the nineteenth century, characterized by a rapidly growing population, overcrowded housing, a congested labour market, and an increasing pool of destitute and homeless children, partly explains the nation's remarkable behaviour toward a small proportion of disadvantaged children. In practical terms, emigration served a dual purpose: offering relief to the excess of poor children in Britain, while proposing a solution to the Canadian labour shortage and increasing demands for farm workers and domestic servants.¹⁴ Theoretically, emigration expressed Victorian religious attitudes, philosophies of environmental heredity, the ideal of the family, and theories of social imperialism.

In Barnardo's pamphlet, "Something Attempted, Something Done," he discusses the overcrowding and unemployment in Britain, matching it with Canadian demands for labour: "We in England, with our 470 inhabitants to the square mile, were choking,

¹⁴Gillian Wagner, Children of the Empire, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982), xiii. See also Marjory Harper, "The Juvenile Immigrant: Halfway to Heaven Or Hell on Earth?", The Immigrant Experience: Proceedings of a Conference Held at the University of Guelph 8-11 June 1989, ed. Catherine Kerrigan, (Guelph: University of Guelph, 1992), 166.

elbowing, starving each other in the struggle for existence: the British colonies over the seas were crying out for men to till their acres, to feed their national life, to add to their human resources."¹⁵ Emigration promised to solve the mass unemployment that raged through Britain. People of the middle classes feared the growing size of the so-called "residuum"; that is, the physically and morally degenerate poor, and emigration of potentially degenerate children soothed their overstated apprehension. The emigration of children within the British Empire alleviated the economic strain on Britain by displacing children to those areas where their labour was needed. The intention of shipping children overseas reflects a dimension of the Victorian attitude towards migration within the Empire, specifically that labour should move from where it was excessive to where it was lacking, reducing labour to a commodity. Consequently, the removal of children overseas was not unnatural, but was part of the Victorian perspective. The fact that the child savers proposing emigration schemes were confronted with the immediate pressure of solving Britain's economic crisis, while simultaneously faced with trying to grapple with fears of a growing "residuum" at a time when the government was both uninterested and ineffective, sufficiently justifies their motivations.¹⁶

British enthusiasm to solve their economic problems and to staff the Canadian labour market met opposition in Canada. Similar to their British counterparts, Canadians valued work, viewing it as a necessary aspect of a child's life, initially welcoming the emigrants with enthusiasm. However, as emigration schemes progressed towards the

¹⁵T.J. Barnardo, Something Attempted, Something Done, (London: 1890), 182.

¹⁶Thomas Jordan, Victorian Childhood: Themes and Variations, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), 334.

1890s, relationships between the Canadian government, public opinion, and various organizations of the day became increasingly complex. Canadian attitudes towards the 'home' children were somewhat equivocal. Prior to the 1890s, emigration was viewed favourably among Canadians wanting a new and ready supply of labour. However, as declines in economic activity became more apparent and jobs became scarce, enthusiasm dwindled and was replaced with anxiety, as this growing hostility resulted in shifting Canadian attitudes.¹⁷ Criticisms were not directed so much at the way children were exploited, but rather at the perceived social threat they posed. While the Canadian government viewed child migration as the most inexpensive means of gaining new immigrants and rural labour to better the nation, generalized fears swept through Canada swaying public opinion.

At this point it is necessary to illustrate the enthusiasm of the Canadian government towards the reception of child migrants, in order to weigh it against the lack of enthusiasm of other Canadian groups. A clear indication of the Canadian government's encouragement of the juvenile emigration movement is manifested in the written correspondence between Thomas Barnardo and the Canadian High Commissioner in London, Sir Charles Tupper. Barnardo initiated this correspondence, dated 26 June 1884, requesting an allotment of fertile, sizable, and suitable land, for the purpose of erecting a farm training centre for young emigrants, whereby they would be trained under the supervision of a bailiff and matron, amongst Canadians, amidst Canadian climate and culture. He stressed the advantages to Canada in terms of providing land for such a farm since this vast territory

¹⁷Wagner, *Children of the Empire*, 133. See also Frances Hobbs, 55.

needed to be cleared and developed anyway. As well, Barnardo ensured that he would provide only boys "of thoroughly approved character, without vicious habits or indeed any habits likely to be detrimental to their future", who would surely become good citizens. In addition to asking for land grants, Barnardo also requested that the boys, after serving out the time of their contract of placement after training, be granted their own plots so that they might become independent farmers.¹⁸ Tupper's prompt and cooperative response, dated 2 July 1884, illuminates the enthusiasm and optimism of the Canadian government towards juvenile emigration. Tupper rallied to Barnardo's cause together with John Pope, Canadian Minister of Agriculture, and with the president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, resulting, in 1887, in securing a grant to Barnardo of seven thousand acres of land in Russell, Manitoba, with funded transportation by way of the CPR, for boys from Quebec and Ontario to Manitoba.¹⁹ The support of the Canadian government stood in contrast to the opposition of the various Canadian organizations.

Playing on charges of unfair labour competition, blaming the migrants for the recession, for flooding the labour market and decreasing wages, and opposing emigration out of empathy and concern for the children and the working conditions they endured, Canadian groups, trade unions specifically, worked to eliminate child emigration.²⁰

¹⁸Letter from T.J. Barnardo to Sir Charles Tupper, 26 June 1884. Wagner also discusses the Barnardo-Tupper correspondence on pages 116-17 in Children of the Empire.

¹⁹Letter from Tupper to Barnardo, 2 July 1884.

²⁰Philip Bean and Joy Melville, Lost Children of the Empire, (London: Unwin, 1989), 73. Despite attacks on emigration, campaigns remained ineffective until the 1920s when Charlotte Whitton, leader of the Canadian Council on Child Welfare, and prominent child and family welfare advocate, coordinated efforts to regulate the movement.

Organized labour groups were among the first to publicly attack the emigrants, claiming that they posed an additional burden on the unemployed.²¹ One of the most prominent members of the Toronto Trades and Union Council, D.J. O'Donoghue, appearing before the Ontario Royal Commission on the Prison and Reformatory System as a delegate of the First Conference on Child Saving in Toronto in 1894, personified Canadian fears of British children. Perhaps the clearest illustration of Canadian fears can be seen in the *Proceedings of the Ontario Conference on child-saving held October 18-19, 1894*, preserved in Ontario Sessional Papers. The conference involved the defence of child emigration by officials involved with the institutions bringing children to Canada, and the opposition, forwarded by Canadian labour organizations, largely represented by D.J. O'Donoghue. Those in defence of emigration replied to a number of questions reflecting Canadian anxieties: "Is this work detrimental to Ontario?", "Is there sufficient supervision?", "Do these children lower the moral tone of the community?", "Do they drive out adult labour?".²²

In response to the defence, labour representatives presented their objections. First, these organizations stressed their beliefs that Britain should be responsible for her poor children, instead of burdening Canada, who had enough dependent children to attend to, arguing in monetary terms of the cost not only to the province of Ontario, but to the nation as a whole.²³ Second, labour groups argued that the emigrant children competed with Canadians, taking Canadian places in both foster homes and the job market: "Every place

²¹Kenneth Bagnell, The Little Immigrants: The Orphans Who Came to Canada, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1980), 70.

²²Ontario Sessional Papers, *Proceedings of the Ontario conference on child-saving held October 18-19, 1894*, 1895 no. 29, 31-3.

²³Ibid., 33.

they have filled has kept another person out, either a man or child of ours out of the place, that is clear. To get places for their children ours must stand aside; to get places for their full-grown men -- because I have seen some of these orphans with side whiskers, full-grown to manhood -- some Canadian had to make way."²⁴ Additionally, labour groups opposed emigration for the same reason farmers supported it: cheap labour. D.J.

O'Donoghue argued that in addition to filling Canadian spots in the labour market, the emigrants worked for lower wages, jeopardizing Canadian jobs at a time when the labour market was overcrowded and unemployment was high.²⁵ Labour and trade unionists argued that in addition to competing with agricultural labour, the emigrants were rivals for urban work as well, since after the term of their apprenticeships was completed, many did not stay on the land, moving to urban centres seeking city employment. This fear illuminated Canadian beliefs that since Canada was to be an agrarian society, with limited urban and industrial advancement, openings in the urban market should be restricted to native Canadians. Canadian preoccupation with agricultural development was an intrinsic aspect of the national attitude about immigrants. Understanding Canadian sentiment about settlement on the land, coupled with "a sense of moral and cultural superiority," helps to make juvenile emigration more comprehensible in terms of nativism and class alienation.²⁶

Labour organizations also focused on the employment of emigrant children as a

²⁴Ibid., 34.

²⁵Ibid., 34. The fact that the fears of organizations such as these were printed in the newspapers of the day, accounts for the widespread discontent among the nation.

²⁶Patricia T. Rooke and R.L. Schnell, "Imperial Philanthropy and Colonial Response: British Juvenile Emigration to Canada, 1896-1930," *Historian* 46: 63, 66, 76.

form of child slavery, whereby "they had to endure treatment 'of a character to make an ordinary Christian's blood curdle'."²⁷ Labour groups classified Ontario farmers as capitalists, describing the immigrants as being similar to slaves until their apprenticeships were completed. While the empathy demonstrated by the labour representatives furthered their own cause, it did nothing to better the experience of the children. Labour groups had little power to effect the limitation of emigration when weighed against the rural demand for cheap labour, and the government's positive outlook.²⁸

The government's response, in attempt to calm Canadian fears, is expressed in a report by J.J. Kelso, the Secretary of Neglected and Dependent Children in Ontario in 1897, in his *Special Report on the Immigration of British Children 1897-8*. In this report, Kelso answered charges of child slavery with the response that "Farm work should be healthful and enjoyable employment for young people, if the employers were reasonable and kindly disposed."²⁹ Kelso, strongly interested in the welfare of children and the prevention of cruelty to children, later credited with forming the first Children's Aid Society, felt that emigration was advantageous to most children.³⁰

Clearly, the British and Canadian general population and policy makers stood diametrically opposed both to each other and amongst themselves, on the issue of importing children from Britain to solve Canada's thirst for agricultural labour. Efforts to

²⁷Wagner, Children of the Empire, 136. See also, Bagnell, 88.

²⁸Parr, 54-5.

²⁹Ontario Sessional Papers, *Special Report on the Immigration of British Children 1897-8*, 17.

³⁰Wagner, Children of the Empire, 155.

ease the poverty problem in Britain was not uncontested in Canada. While farmers accepted the children as cheap labour, other pockets of the population were not so receptive. The juvenile emigrants were caught between Britain's desire to dispose of them, and Canada's reluctance to receive them. This conflict accounts, in part, for the mixed treatment they received upon placement in Canada.

During the late nineteenth century, juvenile emigration was not encouraged by the practicality of economic solutions alone. There were also strong moral and religious pressures that brought a sense of personal responsibility into public questions. The evangelical revival that swept through Britain in the middle of the century was significant, and the theological arguments it embraced provided the impetus for emigration impulses. Evangelicals believed that God determined existing social conditions that were not to be tampered with by humanity. Social reform was viewed as interfering with divine plans for humanity, leaving interim relief, exemplified in emigration schemes, as the only alternative. Another philosophy of the evangelicals embraced the notion of divine involvement in the guidance of everyday events. They firmly believed that God worked through signs, and that it was imperative to wait for God's initiative before beginning any work 'in His Name'. As a result of this predisposition, evangelical children's homes opposed soliciting the general public for financial aid. Emigration relieved the financial cost of keeping children in the homes.³¹ Christian social concern enabled juvenile emigration to be seen as a sound policy from an economic perspective. The cost of

³¹Parr, 35-36. Barnardo was an exception to the principle of waiting for God's initiative, since, as we have seen, soliciting the public for support was a regular part of his itinerary. He was often condemned by his contemporaries for his tendency to act on his own.

equipping, transporting, and placing out children in the colonies was much less than that of the expense of their yearly upkeep in one of the homes.³² From the evidence provided, it is clear that the philanthropists embraced the rhetoric of Christianity to further their cause.

Closely connected with the religious ideology of the day was the widespread psychological philosophy that the gruelling poverty and evil habits of the 'dangerous classes' were not inherent, but were products of environmental heredity. An 1848 debate in the British House of Commons illustrated the strength and permanence of the philosophy of environmental heredity. The debate focused on the notion that poor children posed a threat to the reputation and safety of Britain. The occasion was a proposal presented by Lord Ashley on how to deal with poor children. The poorer people of English society were recognized as "a numerous class, having habits, pursuits, feelings, manners, customs, and interests of their own; living as a class, though shifting as individuals, in the same resorts; perpetuating and multiplying their filthy numbers."³³ The debate also sheds light upon the mentality of Victorian Britain in terms of the impact of one's surroundings in determining behaviour. Lord Ashley and the members of the House discussed how poor, sickly children, once brought under the proper care, appeared to be transformed and strengthened for work:

³² Bagnell, 141. See also, Parr, 30-31. On page 5 of Bean and Melville's work, they state that during the late nineteenth century, it cost approximately £12 a year to maintain a child in an institution in Britain. To send one overseas was a one-time payment of £15. A short paper promoting child emigration by C. H. Bracebridge, on "Juvenile Emigration" in Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science (1866): 793, also discusses the cost involved in maintaining children in British institutions as opposed to shipping them overseas. He estimates that the transmission, maintenance, and education of children between the ages seven to fourteen, would amount to two-thirds less than what it would in England.

³³ Great Britain, House of Commons, *Juvenile Population*, 6 June 1848, 431.

If they are only placed where they may breathe fresh air and receive a moderate supply of food, they will become as efficient for the purposes of labour as any children to be found in any part of Her Majesty's dominions, for the disease from which those children in their original condition suffered is of that kind which arises from bad air and from the want of sufficient sustenance.³⁴

Clearly philosophies such as that of environmental heredity were not simply concocted by the reformers, but were very much a part of Victorian values, and help to make emigration schemes more justifiable.

Consequently, the evangelicals were persuaded that the spiritual and economic situation of the children would be ameliorated if they were transplanted from "evil urban environments in Britain and sent to the morally unpolluted air of rural Canada."³⁵ British perceptions about rural Canada were excessively idealized, coloured by a strong nostalgia for the lost agricultural economy of a once agrarian England. Agricultural idealism, associating rural life with goodness and urban life with sinfulness, inspired the child savers to choose the former environment for the emigrants.³⁶ Benefactors of juvenile emigration insisted that "plentiful food and the 'grand Canadian air' made 'slender sickly saplings' thrive and transformed pallid city boys into 'brawny sun-burnt' lads as different from their former selves as 'chalk from cheese,' that agricultural work 'depauperised', 'unworkhoused' and gave young people pride in 'honest industry'."³⁷ This theory of environmental heredity

³⁴Ibid., 436. It should be noted that Shaftesbury was Lord Ashley during this time.

³⁵Harper, 66.

³⁶Elaine Hadley, "Natives in a Strange Land: The Philanthropic Discourse of Juvenile Emigration in Mid-Nineteenth-Century England," Victorian Studies 33 No. 3 (Spring 1990), 430. See also Parr, 123.

³⁷Parr, 46.

inspired reformers to improve the quality of living of the poor, and especially approved of the notion of transplanting to the colonies those who were still young enough to not have been irrevocably tainted by the existing environment, and to be significantly improved by new surroundings.³⁸ Anticipating no chance of improvement and fearing that if the children remained they might drift toward the criminal and dangerous classes, the organizations responsible for juvenile emigration were convinced that shipping the children overseas was in the best interests of the children involved.³⁹

British enthusiasm about agricultural life, stressing the positive effects of a new, rural environment, stood juxtaposed to Canadian fears that urban children threatened rural innocence, posing both moral and medical dangers. Canadian fears about the children's morality can be partly attributed to British terminology, or categorization of the children, referring to them as "street arabs," "guttersnipes," and "waifs and strays." Labels such as these undoubtedly remained with the children, resulting in prejudice among Canadians.⁴⁰ The British had negative attitudes towards this class of children, and it is no wonder that this negativity was transported overseas. Contrary to British ideas of environmental taint, Canadians believed that child emigrants were of "bad heredity," endangering Canadian society: "the children were, in their very bones, carriers of some dark defect that was a

³⁸Wagner, Children of the Empire, xii.

³⁹ Bean and Melville, 4.

⁴⁰Norman Macdonald, Canada: Immigration and Colonization 1841-1903, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1966), 152. This issue is also forwarded in Proceedings of the Ontario Conference on Child saving held October 18-19, 1894, in defence of child migration.

threat to the country and its people ...".⁴¹ The moral, physical, and social degeneracy perceived to be embodied in the emigrants was believed to be the result of defective rearing by unfit parents, coupled with an inherent hereditary flaw.⁴²

Popular conceptions of class caused many organizations to oppose the arrival of British children, feeling they were tainted and engendered a threat to the well-being of the nation. Urban reformers and women's groups stated that children from Britain were morally unsatisfactory and should therefore not associate with Canadian children. They pressed for the passing of legislation to implement mandatory testing of children for "vicious tendencies and physical and mental infirmities."⁴³ Similarly, country doctors and county sheriffs also expressed their grievances. Doctors, stressing the degenerating nature of urban environments, linked British children with social diseases such as syphilis, reinforcing Canadian perceptions of promiscuity and familial breakdown, assumed to be typical in British ghettos. County sheriffs were opposed to emigration for their own professional reasons, associating the emigrants with crime, feeling they were tainted and would inspire the development of a criminal lifestyle among Canadian youth.⁴⁴

The emigrant children came to embody all that Canadians feared about urbanization: moral degeneracy, promiscuity and familial breakdown, and criminal tendencies. Whereas Britain saw that these children had a chance of redemption by a new

⁴¹Bagnell, 78. See also Neil Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth Century Consensus, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 32.

⁴²Parr, 53. See also Clare McAllister, "The Immigrant Children," Canadian Welfare (Jan.-Feb. 1963): 24.

⁴³Parr, 57. See also Sutherland, 32.

⁴⁴Parr, 53.

environment, Canadians saw them as beyond salvation: "as 'evil influences,' the bearers of 'evil habits' acquired by birth or early nurture in a degenerate society and unlikely after emigration to be unlearned."⁴⁵ Barnardo, in defence of his policy in the light of the accusations made against the quality of children he was sending to Canada, wrote a letter to the Canadian Minister of the Interior protesting the injustice of it all. In this letter, Barnardo established the principles on which he worked and stated that only the "flower of the flock" ; that is, those physically, mentally, and morally fit, who had been efficiently trained by his methods, were shipped to Canada. In response to Canadian apprehension, Thomas Barnardo, using the rhetoric of the Canadian critics, produced a charter outlining the principles of his work which appeared both in his letter to the minister, as well as in a *Report on the immigration of British children, 1897-8*:

1. That only those children shall be emigrated to Canada who are in robust health, physical and mental; who have passed through a period of careful training and have proved themselves during that period to be upright, honest and virtuous, and give reasonable promise of doing well in Canada and growing up to become decent, useful members of society.
2. That continuous supervision shall be exercised over all the young emigrants that have been placed out in Canada both by systematic visitation and by regular and frequent correspondence.
3. That in the case of a total failure of any of the young emigrants the Dominion shall be safeguarded by their return to England whenever possible at the expense of the institutions.⁴⁶

In an attempt to safeguard these conditions, the Minister of the Interior outlined the

⁴⁵Parr, 57.

⁴⁶ Letter from Barnardo to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, 23 February 1894. Ontario Sessional Papers, *Special Report on the immigration of British children, 1897-8*, no. 69, 61. For other primary materials outlining Barnardo's emigration principles, see S.L. Barnardo and James Marchant, *Memoirs of the Late Dr. Barnardo*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1907), and W.T. Stead, "Dr. Barnardo: The Father of 'Nobody's Children'," *Review of Reviews*, XIV (July-Dec., 1896).

terms under which the reformers would receive payment for the children they provided and forwarded a letter stating that "children from Work Houses, Reformatories, Industrial Schools, Penitentiaries or Prisons, or any other Public Institutions of a similar character, are not eligible for the two dollar bonus which is paid on children which have been collected by the individual efforts of the Philanthropic Societies concerned in the work of sending them to Canada."⁴⁷

Overwhelming criticism in Canada resulted in An Act to Regulate the Immigration into Ontario of Certain Classes of Children, passed in 1897. Three principles were set forth in the act: that only respectable children of sound physical health should be brought to Ontario; that each agency have an adequate system of supervision, stressing that since the children were foreigners, they were especially vulnerable to injustice; and that the work should be conducted under government inspection.⁴⁸ The act was considered to be a remedy for the rampant prejudice against the children: "much of this prejudice ... arises from a lack of knowledge of the whole work, and from the great prominence given in the newspapers to the crimes and vagrancies gone astray."⁴⁹ Barnardo and the efforts of the Canadian government to reply to Canadian criticism were insufficient. Despite their efforts, anxiety towards emigration was strong in Canada and Canadians continued to question the wisdom of allowing children to be brought into the country.

Canadian apprehension towards this policy did not reduce the enthusiasm of the

⁴⁷Letter from the Department of the Interior, Ottawa, 9 January, 1896.

⁴⁸Ontario Sessional Papers, *Special Report on the Immigration of British Children 1897-98*, no. 69, 4.

⁴⁹Ibid, 10

British in advocating emigration. In the nineteenth century, children were not shipped off simply for philanthropic reasons; that is, to protect them from the evils of urbanization. They were also removed as a means of preserving social stability in Britain. Reformers' intentions were a combination of social improvement and social control: they sought to alleviate the worst social calamities while attempting to control the destitute and suppress their discontent. Most philanthropic organizations reflected the conservative nature of the middle class people that established them, and therefore faithfully mirrored the established social hierarchy. Emigration promised to offer a scheme that would ameliorate misery among the poor, but not require any transformation in Britain.⁵⁰

One way to ensure social stability in Britain was to strengthen the main institution believed to be responsible for the nation's greatness, the home and the family. For evangelicals especially, developing family-patterned institutions was central to their work, as evidenced in Barnardo's abandonment of barrack-style homes and establishment of cottage homes which were run as a family setting and headed by a 'mother' and 'father'. The notion of environmental heredity, and the resulting separation of children from damaging surroundings, was also affiliated with the Victorian ideal of the family. Children were not only removed from the morally and physically harmful environment of overcrowded cities, they were also separated from parents considered evil and demeaning.⁵¹

⁵⁰Parr, 34. See also Edna Bradlow, "The Children's Friend Society at the Cape of Good Hope," Victorian Studies 27 2 (1984): 155.

⁵¹George K. Behlmer, Child Abuse and Moral Reform in England, 1870-1908, (California: Stanford University Press, 1982), 161. See also Gillian Wagner, Barnardo, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982), 180.

Viewed in the light of the doctrine surrounding the family in the Victorian period, the child savers' promotion of emigration policies seems unwarranted, deliberately separating family members. However, since household harmony remained the "sheet anchor of the nation's greatness," it logically followed that societal improvement had to commence within the domestic unit.⁵² The family was considered the primary civilizing institution in society, and children who were lacking a family environment, either physically or emotionally, risked the chance of "'grow[ing] in evil' until they prized 'the fruits of evil' as 'the best things in the world'."⁵³ The welfare of children was viewed as the key feature of family life determining the future well-being of Britain. The search for family settings guided the philanthropists in terms of their emigration policy, and by viewing the child savers within the context in which they operated, and considering the philosophical arguments that infiltrated nineteenth-century Britain, emigration schemes begin to appear more intelligible.

In Britain, all the children's homes were located away from urban centres, and were surrounded by high walls to keep the children in, and intruders, namely friends and relatives, out. Also, visiting was strictly regulated, granted only on a selective basis. The philosophy behind this was that of the evangelical emigration workers who believed that the children should detach themselves from all previous connections. The reformers believed that if the children returned to their undesirable families and former acquaintances following their stay in the homes, the progress that they had made in the homes would be

⁵²Behlmer, 161.

⁵³Parr, 37.

hindered. Emigration completely removed the threat of corrupting outside influences.⁵⁴

Although parents relinquished their children to the homes largely for economic reasons, or as a result of the breakdown of the family tradition of mutual assistance due to a death or illness, and not due to neglect or lack of caring and affection, the reformers nonetheless perceived them as a threat to the well-being of the children.⁵⁵ For the most part, children arrived at the homes as the result of a series of deaths, illnesses, disputes, and bouts of unemployment that left their parents without any other place to turn. As extended kinship groups grew older, and no relation could take the child after this series of misfortunes, the children were admitted to the homes.⁵⁶ The gross separation of the classes left the middle classes ignorant of the culture of the poorer classes, heightening both suspicion and worry. The separation of poor families through emigration seemed to be an attack on working-class life. Victorians cherished the family, but only a family setting with 'proper' role models. Suitable, well-chosen Canadian homes were equated with a more accurate image of a natural family. The reformers perceived that Canada offered hope for the children, as well as a chance to be welcomed into a moral family environment.⁵⁷

The reformers' actions were dictated by the social conditions of the time; they were responding to a system of ideas and theories that permeated nineteenth-century

⁵⁴Wagner, Children of the Empire, 138.

⁵⁵Ibid., 138.

⁵⁶Parr, 64-66. Parr provides statistics indicating that one half of the Barnardo emigrants were the children of widows or widowers; and one in six were orphans who had lost both parents.

⁵⁷Wagner, Barnardo, 180.

British society. Evidence of how deeply the notion of environmental heredity in terms of the family ideal penetrated Victorian minds is exemplified in Thomas Barnardo's use of "philanthropic abduction." The law made no provision for children to be removed from their parents by the discretion of voluntary and philanthropic organizations, even in cases of suspected maltreatment and neglect or possible moral corruption. Barnardo, however, adopted high-handed methods of forcibly removing children from their homes, and obstructing parents' attempts to reclaim their children in cases where he thought children were threatened by the corruption of their parents.⁵⁸ Those parents who abdicated the care of their children to the child savers were pressured to sign the Canada Clause allowing children to be shipped overseas without parental consent. While this clause was not legally binding, and parents were entitled to demand the return of their child, reformers such as Barnardo took special care to ensure that recovery was unlikely. In 1885, Barnardo stated that there were forty-seven instances in his homes' records in which he had "abducted children, in order to save them...in defiance of the law of the land, and by modes which [were] legally indefensible."⁵⁹ In order to avoid child saver - parent confrontation, Barnardo developed a selective notification policy. Some parents were informed of their child's departure significantly prior to the event. Others were given before-sailing notices, distributed immediately before their child's removal. Those parents deemed unsatisfactory and unrespectable were given after-sailing notices, posted a day after their son or daughter

⁵⁸Hugh Cunningham, The Children of the Poor: Representations of Childhood Since the Seventeenth Century, (Cambridge MA: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1991), 145.

⁵⁹Parr, 67. Parr provides statistics indicating that fifteen per cent of Barnardo's girls, and nine per cent of boys were sent to Canada under the terms of philanthropic abduction.

left for Canada, and sometimes not until the child had arrived in Canada.⁶⁰

Although the separation of families seems inconsistent in an age that valued family relationships, the child savers felt justified in sending children overseas, believing that their action was best for the children's welfare. The families that were separated were the ones that were perceived as posing a moral danger, and where the family ties were considered weak and unbinding.⁶¹ They were separating parents and children in the hope of restoring satisfactory familial ties overseas. However, more often than not, children became members of the 'household' as opposed to members of the 'family'.⁶² Although the establishment of successful family relations in Canada was seldom the case, child saving through emigration must be weighed against the idealistic motives of its proponents and the harsh circumstances under which the children lived in Britain. The family was seen as the key source of social stability, and therefore unstable family environments were to be altered and improved.

The optimism of British private agencies, searching for family stability and envisioning thorough acceptance and a warm welcome for the young migrants, was largely unfounded. While a few of the emigrants were adopted into receptive environments, greater numbers were bound out and placed into agricultural and domestic service under strict indenture agreements that were legally binding for masters, children, and the distributing homes.⁶³ Perhaps the most significant problem encountered by the children

⁶⁰Parr, 71.

⁶¹Bean and Melville, 4.

⁶²Parr, 84.

⁶³Ibid., 84.

was the prejudice they faced in Canada. The children's social circumstances relegated them to a place outside of the Canadian family: "By birth, by background, by speech, by the physical and mental legacies of their early deprivations, the child immigrants were different from Canadian children, too different to plausibly claim kin."⁶⁴ Andrew Doyle, in a Report ordered by the House of Commons in 1875, clarified the various modes in which children were placed out, as defined by Maria Rye. Upon visiting Canada, Doyle found that the number of children adopted in the ordinary sense of the word, that is forming strong attachments, was distinct to young children, and was proportionately small. In addition to ordinary adoption, there were three stages of indenture through which the children passed. 'Indenture of adoption' differed from regular adoption in the sense that it was a sort of boarding out — an apprenticeship placement that gave parents full control over the child until he/she reached the age of majority. The child, usually age six to ten, basically worked without wages. In this stage, Barnardo and various Catholic agencies paid five dollars a month to the family towards the child's upkeep. The mode 'indenture of service' bound a child to service to receive full maintenance in terms of board, clothing, and some schooling, until age fifteen and after that point wages instead of clothing. A third mode of placement, 'indenture of apprenticeship,' bound the child as an apprentice from age eleven to thirteen when he/she began to receive wages. From age fourteen and beyond, the immigrants did adult work year round and contributed significantly to the economy of the household.⁶⁵

⁶⁴Ibid., 96.

⁶⁵Great Britain Parliamentary Papers, 1875 LXIII, 11-12, 21. These stages of service are also articulated in the work of Wesley Turner, "Miss Rye's Children and the Ontario Press, 1875," Ontario History 68 (1976): 177.

Although apprenticeship indentures were designed to protect the children and provide them with material compensation, there was a cost to this protection: the children were often isolated from others in the family, "cast in a distinctive status, as a servant of the family."⁶⁶ Children often lived, slept, and ate apart from the rest of the family. Additionally, indenture contracts seemed to hinder any opportunity of familial development, limiting relationships to economic enterprise. Private agencies such as Barnardo's provided families with five dollars a month for the maintenance of children under age eleven. Once a child reached this age, the children's upkeep was no longer subsidized and the children became worthy of pay. Consequently, families often sent for new, younger boarders, forcing the older children to move on and away from the household to which they had grown used.⁶⁷

Canadian perceptions of home children also affected their treatment of them. As a result of Canadian beliefs that home girls were 'easy' and promiscuous, emigrant girls were vulnerable to the sexual advances of the master, his son, or hired help. To avoid abuse of this kind, the distributing homes tried to ensure that girls were not placed in homes not having an adult woman, and young girls were not to be left alone in the home, unaccompanied by an adult woman. Despite these intentions, letters from young girls document cases of their being left alone with the male head of household for extended periods of time. Boys were prone to mistreatment in a different sense, typified by such

See also Parr, 85-86. Barnardo had similar stages of indenture which he referred to as 'boarding out', 'board, clothing and school', and 'wage'.

⁶⁶Parr, 91.

⁶⁷Ibid., 91.

physical abuse as deprivation and actual beating. Though both boys and girls were often subjected to some type of abuse, boys were more likely to run away from abusive situations than were girls.⁶⁸

The home children were denied many of the privileges afforded to native-born farm children. Philanthropists and the children themselves anticipated attending school on the same basis as the farmers' children; however, the majority were bound to the home with household chores, freeing up the farm children to attend school. Since Canadian farmers saw little reason for their own children to attend school, it is not any wonder that emigrant children were often denied education opportunities. Immigrants not only received fewer opportunities to attend school than their Canadian counterparts, they were rarely welcomed into the classroom. Since long days of arduous labour led them to fatigue, inattentiveness, tardiness, and showing up soiled and unclean for school, teachers saw them as disruptive to the ordinary workings of the school, and used them as "cautionary examples of unclean, unChristian or unCanadian behaviour."⁶⁹ British hopes of education for the young emigrants, and Canadians' reluctance to permit and provide it, shows yet another discrepancy between British and Canadian values.

By the turn of the century, in the wake of the Boer War, a competing set of beliefs came to dominate English ideas about social policy, and this philosophical change, characterized by secular as opposed to religious aims, further encouraged reformers' schemes for juvenile emigration. Public revelation of the ill health and low standards of

⁶⁸Harrison, 22. See also Parr, 114-15. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has also produced a film, Heaven on Earth (1986), that looks at the situation of the home children in Canada.

⁶⁹Parr, 110. See also Harrison, 20.

the working-class recruits for military service in South Africa revealed vulnerability in the links that held the nation together.⁷⁰ There were fears that unless some action was taken, the physical condition of the working class would weaken the well-being of the nation, thus endangering the Empire. The degenerate existence of the poor in Britain, living in overcrowded slums, came to be viewed as a threat, and schemes of assisted imperial emigration were implemented as a means of creating a functionally integrated Empire.⁷¹ In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the theory of urban degeneration -- that generations of slum living within industrial perimeters would inevitably result in the degeneration of the race -- received widespread middle-class support and exemplified increasing anxiety about urban existence. Dr. Freeman-Williams, wrote:

The child of the townsman, is bred too fine, it is too great an exaggeration of himself excitable and plainly precocious in its childhood, neurotic, dyspeptic pale and undersized in its adult state, if it ever reaches it...If it be not crossed with fresh blood, this town type, in the third and fourth generations becomes more and more exaggerated...it has been maintained with considerable show of probability that a pure Londoner of the fourth generation is not capable of existing.⁷²

Fears of racial degeneration and its repercussions motivated and popularized designs to strengthen the Empire, commencing with the salvation of the urban child.

⁷⁰Parr, 142. On page 330 of Outcast London: A Study in the Relationship Between Classes in Victorian Society, Gareth Stedman Jones also discusses increased concerns for imperial unity. The low quality of recruits for the Boer War raised concern about the poor health and racial deterioration of the working classes. Overtones of imperial decline came to dominate social questions.

⁷¹Desmond Glynn, "'Exporting Outcast London': Assisted Emigration to Canada, 1886-1914," Histoire Sociale/Social History 15 29 (May 1982), 209. Gareth Stedman Jones, Outcast London: A Study in the Relationship Between Classes in Victorian Society, (London:Penguin Books, 1984), 331.

⁷²Jones, 127, 151. Jones devotes an entire chapter to the theory of urban degeneration.

The child savers fell under the influence of the secular doctrines of imperialism in terms of motives for child emigration. Thomas Barnardo was quick to adopt the rhetoric of imperialism and promoted emigration as the solution to the threat posed by the degeneration of the casual poor. Barnardo made use of the notion of social imperialism, and promoted himself as an empire-builder and the children as "Bricks for Empire Building."⁷³ Transporting "good British stock" from Britain throughout the Empire became one of the aims of juvenile emigration: "Preserving the Empire was regarded as all-important and its need for British children to keep the flag flying was piously equated with the children's need for its vast spaces."⁷⁴ Juvenile emigration served two specific imperialistic functions: young children could be shaped into good colonial citizens, and girls could be sent out to counter the colonies' desperate shortage of women.⁷⁵ Canada came to be extolled more for its healthy, rural environment, than for its moral attributes. By transplanting children from Britain's overcrowded and crippling surroundings, before their character had been irrevocably tainted, the child savers believed that they were consolidating and securing the Empire.

Notions of imperialism infusing British society met with opposing theories on the Canadian side. Whereas the British philanthropists insisted they were expanding and securing the empire by transplanting British stock, Canadians felt that their lands were being used as a 'dumping ground' for those who were not wanted in Britain, standing firm to their belief in the "biologically inferior strata of British life."⁷⁶ Advocates of the

⁷³Bean and Melville, 78. See also, Wagner, Children of the Empire, xv.

⁷⁴Bean and Melville, 6.

⁷⁵Ibid., 33.

dumping ground thesis viewed assisted emigration of both adults and children as the "shovelling out of paupers," to relieve Britain's poverty problem.⁷⁷ Widespread suspicion in Canada that emigration societies were preoccupied with gathering the refuse of the industrial centres of England and dumping them elsewhere aroused fears in Canada that unregulated importation of children was not in the best interests of the country, and could potentially endanger the future growth of the nation.⁷⁸ Canadians began to resent the idea that their country was being used as a dumping ground for the children of crime, disease, and vice, and this resentment undoubtedly affected their attitude towards and subsequent treatment of the emigrant children.⁷⁹

Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, immediate circumstances and prevailing philosophy persuaded British social reformers that emigration was a justified solution to improve the quality of living for the poorer classes. Emigration appeared to offer solutions to Britain's problem of poverty, while providing Canada with the labour force they demanded. Emigration seemed to reinforce contemporary religious perspectives, ideas of environmental heredity, the idealization of the family, and theories of social imperialism. However the philanthropists were not prepared for the different attitudes upheld on the Canadian side. The reformers' optimism and idealism regarding the

⁷⁶Harper, 177. See also Rooke and Schnell, 67. The dumping ground thesis is part of the wider tradition of colonial immigration history. It was articulated in the British House of Commons by Charles Buller in 1843 and broadened by Edward Gibbon Wakefield in his 1849 "View of the Art of Colonization."

⁷⁷Patricia T. Rooke and R.L. Schnell, 66-68.

⁷⁸Wagner, Children of the Empire, 134.

⁷⁹Ibid, 118.

successful placement of children overseas was not paralleled in Canada, where prejudice, suspicion, and ambivalence led to hostility and toleration rather than welcoming and acceptance. Britain and Canada possessed diametrically opposed value systems on the issue of emigration, and this contrast, in turn, affected the ultimate destiny of the children in Canada. For the British child savers, nothing could be worse than the conditions of urban England. They believed that any situation in Canada was an improvement. Viewed in the context of the time in which the child savers operated, and understanding the theories through which they conceptualized their activities, child emigration becomes a comprehensible, if not, defensible, method of child care. On a larger scale, in addition to delivering children from conditions of poverty, emigration was seen as an effective social policy that the reformers believed served to remedy the ills of British society.

Conclusion

The importance of the evangelical pioneers in child emigration lies in their determination to do their best for children by removing them from undesirable circumstances and placing them in surroundings where they had the opportunity of faring well. When a plethora of children were without care and when the British government dealt insufficiently with them, these evangelical homes and emigration societies believed they offered children a chance to establish themselves in a new and better environment. The implementation of such a severe scheme of dealing with children must be viewed within the context of the Victorian age, in terms of the dominant values, attitudes, and beliefs that infiltrated society, and how these factors subsequently determined child savers' motivations, intentions, and actions. When the reformers are viewed historically, they appear justified in their exportation of children. The child savers were prompted by both practical and philosophical considerations. In practical terms, emigration promised to solve the Canadian labour shortage situation, while simultaneously remedying problems of poverty, overcrowding, and unemployment in Britain. Theoretically, emigration expressed Victorian religious attitudes, notions of environmental heredity, ideals about proper family life, and theories of social imperialism.

In retrospective historiographical assessment, the child savers actions have been questioned, largely because the movement has been viewed in terms of the children's situation in Canada instead of from the perspective of the conditions the children were removed from. To understand the context of the child-saving movement and to

comprehend the factors that motivated rescue workers to implement such a policy as juvenile emigration, it is important to provide a biographical account of the movement's key player, Thomas Barnardo. A biographical assessment of Barnardo attempts to understand the subject within historical perspective. Examining the life of Barnardo helps to make the implementation of such a scheme more intelligible in that it analyses the experiences which motivated child rescue work and accounts for the role that circumstances play in historical events. A transition from the personal study of the dominant figure in such a scheme, to the fundamental conceptions through which rescue workers featured their activities and how these conceptions were countered by opponents of emigration on the Canadian side, lends insight into the movement and the flaws that were inherent from the very beginning. Such a method provides a balanced framework through which to evaluate the situation of children and offers a way to interpret these events.

In attempting to understand the mentality behind child emigration, it is evident that reasons which might have seemed suitable for emigration in Britain, were met with contradiction on the other side of the Atlantic. It is crucial, when examining the juvenile emigration movement and its effect on the children and families involved, to incorporate an appropriate theoretical framework to lend unity to the movement. Thus, using a trans-Atlantic approach, which is thorough in that it examines the movement from the perspective of both countries, helps to give some coherence to the flood of reforms, attitudes and practices of both the proponents and opponents of child emigration. The application of such an approach displays a movement that was inherently flawed --

burdened by two diametrically different attitudes. The situation of the children must be re-evaluated in order not to completely discredit or detract from the basically laudable intentions of the child rescue workers. The situation of the children should therefore be evaluated in light of the contradictions between British and Canadian ideals, which essentially left the children caught between two distinct value systems.

Bringing the situation forward in time reveals that in the early twentieth century, British sentiment towards emigration and children changed. During the war years, the movement of children to Canada was interrupted. By 1919, the economic strain and industrial dislocation as a result of the war, coupled with overwhelming statistics of deaths and decreasing birth rates, worked to counter imperialist sentiments and previous claims that Britain was overpopulated. Imperialism in the form of child emigration came to be seen as superfluous. As well, the Adoption Act of 1920 and government financial provisions for single parents greatly reduced the numbers of deserted and orphaned children readily available for shipment overseas. Increasing concern for the welfare of children re-evaluated emigration as a plot merely to remedy poverty temporarily instead of directly addressing the actual social ills of British society. As well, increasing concern for the well-being of children resulted in reluctance with regard to sending children to Canada where they faced the increasing opposition of labour groups. While it was believed in Britain that the situation of children was generally more favourable in Canada, since they were sent to Canada to work, they should have at least finished school and be of working age before embarking on the journey overseas. Similarly, in addition to changing sentiment in Britain, legislation on the Canadian side prohibited the entrance of children

under the age of fourteen unaccompanied by parents, thus bringing the movement to a halt.

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